

THE DYNAMICS OF FIDELITY AND CREATIVITY:  
LISZT'S REWORKINGS OF ORCHESTRAL AND GYPSY-BAND MUSIC

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This dissertation investigates Liszt's use of borrowed music and his reworking methods when rendering instrumental music for the piano. By examining selected examples in detail, the study demonstrates a dynamic interaction of fidelity and creativity as a significant aesthetic underlying the compositional strategies that Liszt deployed.

Part I examines Liszt's solo-piano arrangements of orchestral music by others—the majority of which were written during his early virtuoso years of the 1830s and 1840s. These arrangements were specifically designated “*partitions de piano*” by the composer himself. Liszt's *partitions* represent his scrupulous approach to the original compositions, validating his unremitting fidelity to the original. At the same time his reworkings illustrate his reinterpretation underneath the surface to offer effective pianistic solutions. His radical transformations of the model may seem contradictory to his overall faithfulness, yet they stem from his conscientious attempts to capture the essence of the original.

Part II continues the fidelity–creativity dynamic by delving into another group of *partitur*-type arrangements, those of Liszt's own symphonic poems for two pianos during his Weimar years 1848–61. By shifting the medium of solo piano to two pianos, the interaction of fidelity and creativity becomes reinvigorated in accordance with new reworking methods for the new medium. Liszt's deep understanding of the original often motivated him to experiment with a distinctive use of the two pianos in physical, visual, and acoustic dimensions.

Part III moves into a completely different realm of music, his reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-band music in his Hungarian Rhapsodies, focusing on Liszt's evocations of cimbalom playing. Whereas his orchestral arrangements represent the pinnacle of his faithful approach to the models on the surface and his artistic creativity underneath, his renderings of cimbalom playing immediately convey his overt novelty in layout, texture, and sound, yet his scrupulousness underneath.

Throughout his reworkings considered in this dissertation, certain types of compositional techniques recur in Liszt's reworking methods. This recurrence permits comparison and contrast among different realms of music studied, ultimately converging on the ever-present theme that fidelity and creativity are not separate phenomena, but mutually motivating and interacting in a dynamic way.

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## Introduction

This dissertation investigates the specific compositional strategies of Franz Liszt in his transferral and reworking process when rendering instrumental music for the piano. The first and main body of the repertoire is taken from orchestral music: the solo-piano arrangements of compositions by others in his early virtuoso years in the 1830s and 1840s. Shifting the medium, the repertoire then moves into his arrangements of his own symphonic poems for two pianos in the Weimar years from 1848 to 1861. Finally, the repertoire further expands the scope of his arrangements to a completely different realm of music, his reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-band practices and styles in his Hungarian Rhapsodies between 1846 and 1853, with a focus on his renderings of cimbalom playing. Through comprehensive investigations of examples from each group of the repertoire, my goal is to demonstrate how Liszt attempts to transform the piano into an orchestra and a Hungarian Gypsy band by paying close attention to the integrity of the model, yet simultaneously providing creative pianistic solutions to capture the distinctive textures and sounds of the model in his piano score. If Liszt's arrangements of orchestral scores by Berlioz and Beethoven represent the pinnacle of his overt faithfulness to his models and at the same time his concealed creativity, at the other end of the spectrum his Rhapsodies encapsulate his artistic creativity that goes far beyond the models yet his conscientious rendering of them underneath. I argue that although the two sides of fidelity and creativity in Liszt's reworking are prevailingly regarded as separate, contradictory, and contrasting, they are actually complementary, are mutually motivating, and interact in a dynamic way throughout this repertoire.

## Previous Studies

The locus of scholarly inquiry into Liszt's orchestral arrangements tends to be situated in a limited part of the repertoire, almost exclusively focusing on the arrangements of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and selected symphonies of Beethoven. In his book *Liszt as Transcriber* (2010), Jonathan Kregor has thought-provoking insights into Liszt's relationships with Beethoven and Berlioz through his arrangements.<sup>1</sup> Kregor's discussion of the Liszt–Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, in particular, reorients our normal aesthetic conception of the genre of piano arrangement from passive promotion of Berlioz's large-scale instrumental work to a high-level “collaboration” of the two artists.<sup>2</sup> Kregor also has provided a stimulating insight into Liszt's arrangements as a project to foster and reshape the Beethoven myth and legacy in the 1840s.<sup>3</sup> Kregor's discussion of Liszt's arrangement of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony focuses on Liszt's “Beethoven project”: how Liszt used Beethovenian *topoi* such as a storm image in his virtuosic pianistic passages; and how Liszt claimed himself as an heir of Beethoven, and by extension claimed the German musical heritage, in his *Glanzzeit* as a performer and through his transcriptions as a composer. Kregor's studies of the Beethoven

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Kregor, “Collaboration and Content,” in his *Liszt as Transcriber*, 41–74. Kregor's compelling concept of “collaboration” has contributed to reassessing the previous views of promotion as represented in Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt*, rev. ed., 3 vols (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1987–97), I, 180, which downgraded Liszt's achievements in his arrangements to a one-sided exchange; Kregor ultimately invites us to understand Liszt's act of arranging in relation to his compositional and artistic aesthetic during the 1830s and beyond.

<sup>3</sup> Kregor, “Monuments and Mythologies,” in his *Liszt as Transcriber*, 112–48. The common theme in Kregor's studies is that Liszt's arrangements shake up the boundaries between “pre-composed” or simple reproduction and newly created material that serves as an independent work in its own right. His focus is more on Liszt's arrangements as experimental compositional tools that directly relate to his subsequent or later original works.

transcriptions thus expand the scope of understanding Liszt's Beethoven project in a cultural and aesthetic context.

Liszt's arrangements of Beethoven symphonies have received the most significant amount of attention from scholars.<sup>4</sup> A number of writings have focused on Liszt's superiority as an arranger compared with other contemporaneous pianists who arranged the Beethoven symphonies.<sup>5</sup> In a comprehensive article, Zsuzsanna Domokos expands such comparative studies, embracing examples of both Liszt's early and late arrangements and also distinguishing Liszt's two versions of 1837 and 1865 from others by Czerny, Watts, and Hummel.<sup>6</sup> In his thorough investigations of Liszt's early arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies from the 1830s, Alex Schröter provides several consistent features of Liszt's transferral methods, including his avoidance of ready-made patterns, his preference for the strings, his emulations of various orchestral sounds, and his use of virtuosic figurations that exceed the limit of feasibility, such as chords of a tenth.<sup>7</sup> Despite the ample evidence they consider, the studies cited above focus primarily

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<sup>4</sup> William Michael Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven: partitions de piano*" (DMA document, University of Texas at Austin, 1981); Walden Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions of Orchestral Literature" (PhD diss., University of Northern Colorado, 1992); Zsuzsanna Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte': Beethovens Symphonien in Transkriptionen von Franz Liszt und seinen Vorgängern," *Studia musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 37, no. 2/4 (1996): 249–341; Axel Schröter, "Der Name Beethoven ist heilig in der Kunst": *Studien zu Liszts Beethoven-Rezeption* (Sinzig: Studio, 1999), particularly 116–42; Kara Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements and Questions of Genre: A Study of Liszt's Interpretive Approaches" (PhD diss., University of North Texas, 2010); Kregor, "Monuments and Mythologies," in his *Liszt as Transcriber*, 112–48.

<sup>5</sup> Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,'" 249–341. Beside Domokos's studies, Kregor also compares Liszt's Beethoven Fifth with those by his contemporaries, ranging from the perfunctory, as in the four-hand version aimed for domestic sphere, to a more ambitious ensemble version; Kregor, "Monuments and Mythologies," in his *Liszt as Transcriber*, 112–48. Similarly, Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," distinguishes Liszt's from others by J. N. Hummel and Otto Singer, primarily focusing on their transcriptions of Beethoven's Sixth.

<sup>6</sup> Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte.'"

<sup>7</sup> Schröter, "Der Name Beethoven," 116–42; particularly at 131–32, Schröter encapsulates seven elements of Liszt's transferral techniques.

on Liszt's early arrangements of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies (1837–41), mostly overlooking his late arrangements of the remaining Symphonies (1861–63).

Writings about Liszt's set of Beethoven's symphonies have also provided useful examples of his transferral process, as in the dissertations of William Michael Cory (1981) and Walden Dale Hughes (1992).<sup>8</sup> These studies, however, focus more on what Liszt changes to make the orchestral score playable on the piano—for example, whether he eliminates or incorporates notes to facilitate execution—rather than on how he attempts to capture the essence of Beethoven's intentions in his reworkings. In addition, these writings reiterate the generic underlying purposes of Liszt's arrangements of symphonies over and over, albeit in broader contexts: (1) his extension of the piano repertoire as a touring virtuoso; (2) his expansion of pianistic techniques and resources; and (3) his attempts to promote the model or its composer. Furthermore, these studies organize the examples largely into two categories of “literal” and “non-literal” arrangement, proposing to relate the “literal” to Liszt's fidelity and the “non-literal” to his creativity.<sup>9</sup> This two-part conception and organization ultimately sets up the distinction, contrast, and polarity between the two sides of reworking. The close inspection of Liszt's arrangements in my study, however, reveals that these two sides are not completely separate.

My dissertation differs in two other respects from the previous studies: the repertoire and the methodology. In his thematic catalog of 1877, Liszt introduced the term “*partition*”—which means “score” in French—to denote arrangements of large

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<sup>8</sup> Cory, “Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*”; Hughes, “Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions.”

<sup>9</sup> Hughes's outline (1992) shares the same idea as Cory's (1981), designating chapters under the titles of “literal transcription” and “non-literal transcription” and organizing examples in these two broad categories.

works; the term thus implies both a piano score and a score for orchestra or ensemble.<sup>10</sup>

Liszt himself described his unique concept of “*Partitions de piano*”—that is, a meticulous arrangement down to the finest detail—as he embarked on his arrangement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* and as he further refined the concept in the preface to his arrangements of Beethoven’s symphonies.<sup>11</sup> Table 1 shows Liszt’s orchestral arrangements that occupy major positions among his piano *partitions*.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> “Clavier-Partituren (*Partitions de piano*) von Symphonien, Overturen etc,” in Franz Liszt, *Thematisches Verzeichniss der Werke* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1877; reprint, London: H. Baron, 1965), 57–64.

<sup>11</sup> The concept of “*partition*,” Liszt’s notion of the term, and his preface will all be discussed in Chapter 1.

<sup>12</sup> The dates of composition in Table 1 are taken from Franz Liszt, *Neue Ausgabe sämtlicher Werke* (henceforth referred to as *NLA*): Ser. II. *Freie Bearbeitungen und Transkriptionen für Klavier zu zwei Händen* [Books 1–24], ed. Imre Mezö (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1970–). Beside the arrangements included in Table 1, there are more in the group of *partitions* of Liszt’s catalogue; however, they are not considered in this study. The two arrangements of large-scale chamber ensemble compositions, the *Grand Septuor de Beethoven* (1841) and *Hummel’s grosses Septett* (1848), are not taken into account among the orchestral arrangements. There are also four more arrangements of orchestral compositions, three of music by Berlioz and one by Wagner: for the former, *Marche de pèlerins* from *Harold en Italie* (1837), *Danse des sylphes de la Damnation de Faust* (1860), and *Marche au supplice de la Symphonie fantastique* (1865); for the latter, *Overtüre zu Tannhäuser* (1848). *Marche de pèlerins* is a free arrangement that includes Liszt’s own extensive fantasy in mm. 248–330, and may thus be distinguished from his faithful *partitions* covered in this study. *Danse des sylphes* and *Marche au supplice* are the *partitions* written in Liszt’s Weimar years, and thus not considered in Part I of this study, which focuses on Liszt’s *partitions* during his virtuoso years of the 1830s and 1840s. *Marche au supplice* is a reworking of his earlier *partition* of the fourth movement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* with an additional introduction, and thus *NLA*, Book 16, xii, regards Liszt’s version as a paraphrase. The Overture to *Tannhäuser* is also one of Liszt’s Weimar arrangements. As *NLA*, Book 23, xv, points out, the *Tannhäuser* arrangement follows the original faithfully, yet is designated as a “concert paraphrase” in the first editions. The arrangement of Berlioz’s *Le Roi Lear* overture is not included in the *partitions* of Liszt’s catalogue, yet it is aligned with his previous *partitions* of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* and *Les Francs-Juges*, and thus is considered in this study.

Table 1. Liszt's Piano *partitions* of Symphonies and Overtures

Source composer	Composition	Date
Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphonies 5–7	1837–38
	“Marcia Funebre” from No. 3	1841
	Symphonies 1–4 (except “Marcia Funebre”), 8, 9	1863
Hector Berlioz	<i>Roi Lear</i> Overture	1831
	<i>Franco-Juges</i> Overture	1833
	<i>Symphonie fantastique</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> edition)	1834
Gioachino Rossini	<i>Guillaume Tell</i> Overture	1838
Carl Maria von Weber	<i>Oberon</i> Overture	early 1840s
	<i>Der Freischütz</i> Overture	early 1840s
	<i>Jubel</i> Overture	1846

To comprehend Liszt's transferral process fully, we must include more of the repertoire in his massive project of piano arrangements. First, in the *partition* group, taking into account the major portion of the *partitions* (see Table 1) helps to demonstrate how they are related to the concept of “*partition*” and at the same time what aspects of each work are distinctive in reworking strategy. Second, Liszt's solo-piano arrangements need to be extended to the two-piano arrangements of his Weimar years—the majority of which are those of his own symphonic poems—asking how the use of two pianos facilitates his exploration of new techniques of reworking. Finally, reorienting Liszt's arrangements to embrace his rendering of Hungarian Gypsy-band practices and styles enriches the study of Liszt's instrumental arrangements.

The methodology of this study has been motivated by and adapted from a scholarly consideration of musical borrowing as a field that has been underway since J. Peter Burkholder developed it in his studies on Charles Ives and others, including his

seminal article “The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field.”<sup>13</sup>

Burkholder uses the umbrella term “musical borrowing” to encompass all uses of existing music, including the reworkings and arrangements under examination here. The discussion of each group of arrangements in my repertoire unfolds largely in three aspects: (1) the biographical circumstances of the arrangements, deepening the relationship between the model composers and compositions on the one hand and Liszt and his arrangements on the other hand; (2) the analytical evidence with interpretative and critical questions, investigating how Liszt uses and treats the existing material; and (3) the function and meaning of the borrowed material in Liszt’s versions and the aesthetic purposes of Liszt’s reworking. Musical analyses, interpretations, and inquiry into aesthetics underlying Liszt’s reworking occupy the main portion of my dissertation.

By understanding Liszt’s arrangements in relation to the field of borrowing, my dissertation can help to deepen the relationship between the new composition and the older one and to provide a systematic discussion of Liszt’s transferral and reworking strategies. In his article, Burkholder lays out several questions. The question of genre and medium in Liszt’s arrangements and their models sets the stage for the essential problems imposed on Liszt’s act of arrangement: that is, the transferral of a composition for orchestral ensemble to solo piano or two pianos. The following four issues enable us to distinguish types of reworking among his arrangements: (1) the different traditions of the original material—whether it is from Western orchestral art music or Hungarian

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<sup>13</sup> J. Peter Burkholder, “The Uses of Existing Music: Musical Borrowing as a Field,” *Notes* 50, no. 3 (March 1994): 851–70; *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Borrowing” by Burkholder, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 14 February 2014; Burkholder, gen. ed., “Musical Borrowing: An Annotated Bibliography,” available from <http://www.chmtl.indiana.edu/borrowing>, accessed 14 February 2014.

popular Gypsy music; (2) what Liszt took from his sources—whether the full structure of an orchestral composition or the peculiar characteristics of the Gypsy-band performance practices and styles; (3) who it is borrowed from—whether his predecessors, himself, or Gypsy-band musicians; and (4) whether the reworked material is recognizable or hidden, as in the overt “authorial” presence in his orchestral arrangements in comparison with his references to Hungarian Gypsy-music idioms in both recognizable and concealed manners.

The question of how Liszt treats the existing material is answered by illustrating his transferral process: whether he adhered closely to the original, substantially reworked it, or both (complementary sides of the reworking). The question about the meaning of the borrowed material illuminates whether he pays homage to his models or model composers, attempts to propagandize his own orchestral compositions, or finds it useful to diverge from classical conventions by borrowing Gypsy-band idioms. Along with the distinctions among the arrangements, the question about the aesthetic purposes of Liszt’s borrowing leads to relating the arrangements to one other. It turns out that they share several significant patterns of reworking strategies, illustrate both Liszt’s close attention to the essence of the original and his inventive pianistic solutions, and ultimately represent his aspiration to create on the keyboard all the essentials of the orchestra or Gypsy band.

The analytical evidence distinguishes my musical examination from the existing studies by asking about more essential aspects of Liszt’s reworking. I raise the following issues: (1) how Liszt solves the problems of transferring the full orchestra or Gypsy band to the solo piano, capturing the integrity of the borrowed material through the pianistic



sources; (2) how these attempts of his to render the original as faithfully as possible on the piano, often evaluated as mere literal transcription in the case of his *partitions*, include his rendering of the distinctive instrumental colors and effects of the model; and finally, (3) how Liszt's reworkings in the transferral process show the confines of the piano yet at the same time his virtuosity in solving the dilemmas involved in arrangement.

### Terminology

The terms "transcription" and "arrangement" are often used interchangeably by musicologists and theorists. Although a strict division between the two terms is not possible because of their overlapping characteristics, "arrangement" in general is defined in a broader sense than "transcription." The term "arrangement" tends to embrace both a literal and a freer style of reworking, whereas "transcription" is usually used only in the more literal sense of reproduction.<sup>14</sup> The process of the "arrangement" also usually entails two important properties of the reworking and a change of medium.<sup>15</sup> I will use the term "arrangement" for the repertoire that comprises Part I and II in my study, primarily for three reasons. First, the genre of the original composition seems to define

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<sup>14</sup> For further discussion of Liszt's use of a variety of terms for piano transcriptions and arrangements, see Franz Liszt, *Thematisches Verzeichniss der Werke*; *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Arrangement," by Malcom Boyd, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 10 March 2014; *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Transcription," by Ter Ellingson, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 10 March 2014; Wolfgang Dömling, *Franz Liszt und seine Zeit* (Laaber: Laaber-Verlag, 1985), 163; David Wilde, "Transcriptions for Piano," in Alan Walker, ed., *Franz Liszt: The Man and his Music* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1970), 168–202; Wolfram Huschke, "Zum kultur historischen Stellenwert von Bearbeitungen um 1840," in Gottfried Scholz, ed., *Liszt Studien 4: Der junge Liszt* (Munich: Emil Katzibichler, 1993), 95–99; András Batta, "Die Gattung Paraphrase im Schaffen von Franz Liszt: Gattung Paraphrase—die musikalische Hassliebe Liszts," in *Liszt-Studien 4*, 135–42; and Kregor, *Liszt as a Transcriber*, 101–3.

<sup>15</sup> Boyd, "Arrangement," describes "arrangement" as "the reworking of a musical composition, usually for a different medium from that of the original."

the term, as in Liszt's categorization of "arrangement" in his 1877 catalogue, which includes model compositions that were originally instrumental, primarily large-scale orchestral music, and thus the repertoire of this study therefore would fit his sense of arrangement. Second, the repertoire also involves a change of medium from an orchestral composition to solo piano or two pianos. Finally, Liszt's reworking style reveals both the faithful and the creative as complementary, going beyond literal reproduction. Along with the term "arrangement," I also use "*partition*" as a particular type of arrangement, as will be further explained in Chapter 1.

## **Organization**

My dissertation comprises four main parts. The first part investigates Liszt's early "*partition*" groups of arrangements written during his virtuoso years (1830s and 1840s). The inclusion of his lifelong project of the set of Beethoven's symphonies (until 1863), nonetheless, crosses the boundary between the early and middle-period arrangements and even goes a little beyond into the late period. The second part moves to Liszt's middle-period orchestral arrangements in his Weimar years (1848–61), focusing on two-piano arrangements of his own symphonic poems. The third part examines what we can learn by comparing Liszt's arrangements of orchestral compositions with his reworking of Hungarian Gypsy-band music as represented in his Hungarian Rhapsodies (1846–53). Finally, the discussion of the previous three parts leads to the Conclusion, which synthesizes the overarching aesthetics of his transferral and reworking across the repertoire of this study.

*Part I: Liszt's Piano "partitions" in the 1830s and 40s*

Part I is divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 discloses the concept of "*partition*" and Liszt's meticulous notation as an integral part of his *partition*. Chapters 2 and 3 delve into Liszt's *partitions* of "sacred texts," those of orchestral music by Beethoven and Berlioz, respectively, which represent the most scrupulous renderings among his *partitions*. Although Liszt's *partitions* of Beethoven's music were composed later than those of Berlioz's, the former precedes the latter because it helps to provide more comprehensive investigations of Liszt's transferral methods drawn from the massive scope of its project.

Chapters 4 and 5 move to another group of *partitions* of "reassessing," those of overtures by Rossini and Weber, respectively. These *partitions* continue the earlier aesthetic purpose of a conscientious arrangement, while simultaneously diverging from the mainstream of *partition* with respect to the arranger's distinctive approach to each group. The affinity of the Liszt–Rossini arrangement with his song transcriptions written around the same time with respect to textural content creates this arrangement's own character. In the Liszt–Weber arrangements, the two contrasting sides of the process of simplification and amplification interact with each other, illustrating how carefully Liszt chose the two types of process effectively to heighten Weber's dramatic orchestral writing in his own pianistic terms. The investigations of Chapters 2–5 thus help to illuminate both the common thread and the distinction and subtlety of his reworking among his *partitions*.

Throughout Chapters 1 to 5, musical analyses and interpretation of Liszt's reworkings demonstrate how successfully he provided solutions to the intricate orchestral

textures and distinctive orchestral sound and effect in pianistic terms. Specific instances illustrate how successfully Liszt captured the integrity of the original in his piano scores, how effectively he provided solutions to problems in transferring the textures and effects of the model to the keyboard, and how individually he reworked the originals in pianistic terms, particularly by ingenious renderings of the distinctive instrumental colors and sounds of the model. The musical analyses ultimately demonstrate that the place where he preserves his fidelity to the model becomes simultaneously the place where he displays his creativity in order to approximate the original effectively in his pianistic terms. Concurrently, his liberal renderings on the surface stem from his deep, conscientious approach to the essence of the original. The dynamic of fidelity and creativity thus serves as a significant aesthetic underpinning of his *partitions*.

*Part II: Liszt's Two-piano Arrangements of his Symphonic Poems or Symphonies with Chorus in his Weimar Years*

Whereas Liszt's numerous *partitions* represent his arrangements of orchestral music for solo piano during his virtuoso years, the prominent component of his orchestral arrangements during his Weimar years from 1848 to 1861—partly as a natural outcome of his career's shift to conductor, composer, and interpreter—is a group of his two-piano arrangements, those of his twelve symphonic poems and two symphonies with chorus, as delineated in Table 2.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Liszt's symphonic poems total thirteen, but the last one, *Von der Wiege bis zum Grabe*, was completed in 1882 and published in 1883, which goes beyond the repertoire under study of his orchestral arrangements in his Weimar years; also it was originally a piano suite and later orchestrated then re-transcribed for four-hand arrangement but not for two pianos. The dates of compositions in Table 2 follow Humphrey Searle's catalogue in *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Franz Liszt," <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 10 February 2014.

Table 2. Liszt's Two-piano Arrangements of Orchestral Compositions at Weimar

Source composer	Composition	Date: composed/published
Beethoven	Ninth Symphony	1851/1853
Liszt's 12 symphonic poems		
	<i>Festklänge</i>	1853/1856
	<i>Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne</i>	1854–56/1857
	<i>Tasso</i>	1854–56/1857
	<i>Les Préludes</i>	?1855/1856
	<i>Orpheus</i>	1855–56/1856
	<i>Mazeppa</i>	1855/1857
	<i>Prometheus</i>	1855–56/1856–57
	<i>Héroïde funèbre</i>	1854–56/1856–57
	<i>Hungaria</i>	1855–56/1857
	<i>Die Ideale</i>	1855–56/1858
	<i>Hunnenschlacht</i>	1857–60/1861
	<i>Hamlet</i>	1858–60/1861
Liszt's symphonies with chorus		
	<i>Eine Faust-Symphonie</i>	1856/1862, rev. 1870
	<i>Eine Symphonie zu Dantes Divina Commedia</i>	1856–57/1858–59

Arrangements for two pianos in the nineteenth century, in comparison with those for solo piano or four hands, have been studied only cursorily or invoked as part of an umbrella subject, “piano transcriptions.”<sup>17</sup> Liszt's two-piano arrangements, despite their number and distinctive position in the midst of the development of the repertoire in mid-century, occupy a marginalized position in the literature; indeed, they are almost absent from the scholarly literature. Among the few attempts, Paul A. Bertagnolli investigates Liszt's piano arrangements of his fifth symphonic poem, *Prometheus*, for four hands and

<sup>17</sup> For general approaches to piano duets, which embrace four-hand and two-piano settings in a type of arrangement or as an independent composition, see *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Piano Duet” by Frank Dawes, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 26 January 2015; Helmut Loos, *Zur Klavierübertragung von Werken für und mit Orchester des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Munich: Emil Katzschler, 1983), particularly at p. 29; Howard Ferguson, *Keyboard Duets from the 16th to the 20th Century* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Ernest Lubin, *The Piano Duet; A Guide for Pianists* (New York: Grossman, 1970).

two pianos, based on the manuscripts and published scores, ultimately demonstrating a distinctive stage of Liszt's compositional process that interrelates his arrangements intimately with the revision of his full orchestral scores.<sup>18</sup> In his doctoral document, Kristian Iver Klefstad explores a dozen two-piano arrangements of orchestral compositions written from the 1850s through the 1920s, in which Liszt's two-piano arrangement of the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1851) and of his *Faust* Symphony (1856) serve as a starting point in the development of a "strict" symphonic arrangement for the medium.<sup>19</sup> Although these attempts by Bertagnolli and Klefstad help to uncover specific layers of Liszt's transferral process, Bertagnolli's sole focus on *Prometheus* arrangements and Klefstad's emphasis on the twentieth-century trend of the repertoire do not provide a detailed look at Liszt's transferral methods. Additionally, their discussions do not take into account Liszt's transferral representing his deep understanding of the original, particularly his responses to the novel orchestral effects and programmatic references of his own symphonic poems, which were both condemned and praised by his contemporary critics.<sup>20</sup>

Liszt's two-piano arrangements, despite the scanty attention to the subject, have great merit in several respects, as discussed in Chapter 6. First, they occupy a major position in his oeuvre of arrangements of orchestral compositions during his Weimar

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<sup>18</sup> Paul A. Bertagnolli, "Transcribing *Prometheus*," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 54–56 (2003): 134–55.

<sup>19</sup> Kristian Iver Klefstad, "Style and Technique in Two-Piano Arrangements of Orchestral Music, 1850–1930" (DMA document, University of Texas at Austin, 2002). Klefstad provides musical examples and analyses, although they are not examined in depth. Liszt's two-piano arrangement of the finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony is frequently invoked as part of Liszt's solo-piano arrangements of the set of Beethoven's symphonies.

<sup>20</sup> For the contemporary reception of Liszt's symphonic poems, see Keith T. Johns, *The Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt*, ed. and introduced by Michael Saffle (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 83–138. Part of the reception by Berlin critics will be discussed in relation to Liszt's two-piano arrangements in Chapter 6.

years, as mentioned earlier in Table 2. Moreover, the concept of “faithful” orchestral arrangements for two pianos is more associated with the trend in the later nineteenth and early twentieth century, as cultivated by many of Liszt’s students and successors.<sup>21</sup> This trend bolsters the claim of a significant position in Liszt’s oeuvre, when the repertoire of two-piano arrangements developed toward a more meticulous approach to the original orchestral compositions in the mid-nineteenth century. Second, some of Liszt’s correspondence, including his letters to Louis Köhler in 1856, reveals that he preferred his two-piano settings to their four-hand counterparts, was involved in composition and publication of the former more consistently and proactively, and found the former more effective in approximating his orchestral range and effects.<sup>22</sup> Third, there are accounts of Liszt’s two-piano arrangements of the symphonic poems being used as concert pieces in both private and public concerts. Among these concerts, Walter Bache’s London concert series in 1865–87 offers an immediate contrast with the performances of the four-hand arrangements, which were intended primarily for domestic music-making.<sup>23</sup> Moreover,

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<sup>21</sup> This is suggested in Klefschad’s document but is essentially based on the data about the published repertoire in Friedrich Hofmeister, *Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur* and supplements (1817–27), ed. Carl Friedrich Whistling with an introduction by Neil Ratliff (New York: Garland Publishing, 1975), as well as further supplements published annually as Hofmeister’s *Musikalisch-literarischer Monatsbericht* beginning in 1829 (Leipzig: Friedrich Hofmeister, 1829–1943). Hofmeister’s inventories have provided a foundation for studies of nineteenth-century piano transcriptions, including those of Thomas Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription and Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Musical Reception,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 52 (summer 1999): 255–98 and Valerie Woodring Goertzen, “The Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms” (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 1987), all of which will be further discussed in Chapter 6.

<sup>22</sup> For the letters of 1856 to Louis Köhler, see Franz Liszt, *Franz Liszt’s Briefe*, ed. La Mara, 8 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1893–1905), I, 122, 224–25; its English version, *Letters*, I, 270, 273, respectively; also partially cited in Bertagnoli, “Transcribing *Prometheus*,” 134–35.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Allis, “Promoting the Cause: Liszt Reception and Walter Bache’s London Concerts 1865–87,” *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 51 (Spring 2002): 1–38; reproduced in Allis, “Promoting through Performance: Liszt’s Symphonic Poems in the London Concerts of Walter Bache,” in *Europe, Empire, and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, ed. Julian Rushton and Rachel Cowgill (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 59–80; Allis, “‘Remarkable Force, Finish, Intelligence and Feeling’: Reassessing the Pianism of Walter Bache,” in *The Piano in Nineteenth-Century British Culture*, ed.

Liszt's two-piano arrangements of his symphonic poems were performed in a public concert hall during his time and afterwards, suggesting that they pertain to the province of professional pianists, including the composer himself and his pupils. Thus, Liszt did not necessarily confine himself to amateurs' demands, but instead was able to pursue a higher level of technical and artistic challenges in the transferring process, just as he had developed in his earlier period.

Finally, compared with his four-hand counterparts, his two-piano arrangements of his symphonic poems are in general more meticulously faithful to the original orchestral score, demonstrating how scrupulously the composer approached orchestral textures and sonorities, as a continuation of his earlier solo-piano arrangements of orchestral music. While revealing the continuum and momentum of his orchestral concepts in his arrangements, the two-piano arrangements require the arranger-composer's skillful manner of coordinating the two pianos or pianists. As further discussed in Chapter 7, using two pianos allowed Liszt to explore new types of transferring process and their resultant effects, including the distribution of the material between the two pianos and the interaction between the two pianists. More importantly, the particular types of techniques in many instances are used to illuminate his progressive ideas intrinsic to his symphonic poems, including his use of distinctive orchestral effects in relation to particular programmatic contents. For this reason, Liszt's transferral techniques come to represent not just a practical means for the change of medium but an important vehicle to offer his reinterpretation of the original program music in his own pianistic terms. Relating to the

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Therese Ellsworth and Susan Wollenberg (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 193–216; see also Constance Bache, *Brother Musicians: Reminiscences of Edward and Walter Bache* (London: Methuen, 1901).



previous discussions of Liszt's solo-piano arrangements in Part I, his reworkings in his two-piano arrangements continue the fidelity–creativity dynamic, yet the dynamic becomes revitalized because new compositional methods emerge from the transferral process to the new medium of two pianos.

### *Part III: Liszt's Renderings of Cimbalom Playing in his Hungarian Rhapsodies*

Part III takes us to a different realm of Liszt's reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-band styles and idioms in his Hungarian Rhapsodies (1846–53). Whereas Part I and II deal with the published orchestral scores of Western European composers as predetermined sources for Liszt's arrangements, the source material of his Rhapsodies is contingent upon the dialogue between sources available to us and the actual performance practice of Hungarian Gypsy music.<sup>24</sup> For instance, several existing tunes that Liszt used for his Rhapsodies have been identified.<sup>25</sup> His treatment of the tunes in paraphrase or fragments

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<sup>24</sup> For the issue of the written versus aural or oral sources in Hungarian Gypsy music, the discussion of the musical illiteracy and the lack of formal musical training of Gypsy musicians in general, as well as the repertoire influenced by Western European classicism, see Bálint Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, trans. Fred Macnicol (Budapest: Corvina, 1978), 66–119; Lynn Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music from Liszt to Bartók* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 35–39; Jonathan Bellman, *The Style hongrois in the Music of Western Europe* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1993), 109. Gypsy improvisation was often alleged to stem from Gypsies' lack of proper learning, wandering lifestyle, and less sophisticated culture. Lydia Goehr, *The Quest for Voice: On Music, Politics, and the Limits of Philosophy: The 1997 Ernest Bloch Lectures* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 151, also points out that improvisation was associated with primitive or at least with dilettante musicians for whom the awareness of the author of the work was not important in comparison with the performance-centered musical process. For discussion of Gypsy improvisation and exoticism, see David Malvinni, "A Nineteenth-Century Tale of Two Others: Gypsy Improvisation and the Exotic Remainder," in the author's *The Gypsy Caravan: From Real Roma to Imaginary Gypsies in Western Music and Film* (New York & London: Routledge, 2004), 43–62; Anna G. Piotrowska, "Expressing the Inexpressible: The Issue of Improvisation and the European Fascination with Gypsy Music in the 19th Century," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 43 (December 2012): 325–41.

<sup>25</sup> Ervin Major, "Liszt Ferenc rapszódiai" [Ferenc Liszt's rhapsodies], *Muzsika* 1, no. 1 (1929): 47–54. Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 115, provides a source tune for the opening of Rhapsody No. 8, which will be discussed under one of Liszt's renderings in Chapter 9. It is significant that the sources are not "composed" on paper as we understand the process in Western art music. A "whistling composer," as mentioned in Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 150, meant that a Hungarian patron would usually provide a tune, then the members

immediately invites us to relate it to the reworking methods in his operatic paraphrases and fantasies. Yet at a deeper level, the way he arranges the tunes seems to become less significant than his attempts to capture the way Gypsy-band musicians arranged tunes in their performances. Despite the entirely different musical realm of the Gypsy band, Liszt's close attention to the distinctive instruments and his search for ways to evoke their sounds and playing styles on the piano all relate to what he had already explored in his earlier orchestral arrangements as a continuation of the transferral and reworking process for his solo-piano versions.

The prerequisite studies for the analysis of Liszt's *Rhapsodies* include the composer's own *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859), a philosophical justification and legitimation for his Rhapsodies.<sup>26</sup> Although the book is full of flowery writing and there is a question of the authenticity of the authorship, it contains valuable passages related to musical description and commentary.<sup>27</sup> Bálint Sárosi's book *Gypsy Music* (1978) provides probably the most essential and significant source material in the scholarship of Hungarian Gypsy music.<sup>28</sup> For our purpose, the book offers useful sources for the Gypsy band, which appeared in the orbit of Vienna in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century with essentially European instruments, setting the stage for the model of Gypsy band to which Liszt would refer.<sup>29</sup> Géza Papp's "Die Quellen der 'Verbunkos-

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of the Gypsy band applied their skills in fleshing it out in performance. Personal communication with Professor Lynn Hooker.

<sup>26</sup> Franz Liszt, *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (Paris: A. Bourdilliat, 1859). Franz Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, trans. Edwin Evans (London: W. Reeves, 1926).

<sup>27</sup> Bellman, *Style hongrois*, 175–84; Hooker, *Redefining*, 76–93.

<sup>28</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*.

<sup>29</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, particularly the three chapters "The First Famous Gypsy Bands. Panna Czinka, János Bihari," "The Verbunkos," and "Gypsy Musicians in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century," 66–84, 85–119, and 120–140, respectively. For further anecdotes of Hungarian Gypsies in London and Paris in the 1840s and 1850s, see Csaba Szijjártó, *A cigány útra ment . . . : Magyar cigányzenészek*

Musik”” furnishes an extensive amount of the published source material of Hungarian-Gypsy dances.<sup>30</sup> A comprehensive and systematic approach to Hungarian Gypsy-music style is also found in the studies of the *style hongrois* by Jonathan Bellman and Csilla Pethő, Shay Loya’s insightful discussions of harmonic idioms, and most recently, Lynn Hooker’s thorough studies of rhythm as an essential marker.<sup>31</sup>

Hooker proposed the terms “Hungarian-style” and “Hungarian-Gypsy style” music as diverging from the prevailing use of *verbunkos* and *style hongrois*. The former refers to Hungarian national art music originating from “recruiting” dances and their music, and the latter denotes the adaptation of stylistic elements of *verbunkos* in Western art music.<sup>32</sup> In the present study, I have followed her terms throughout. One of the reasons she chose the terms is that the distinction between *verbunkos* and *style hongrois*

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*külföldjárása a kiegyezés előtt* [The Gypsy Went on the Road . . . : Foreign Travels of Hungarian Gypsy Musicians before the Compromise [1867]] (Budapest: Masszi, 2002), 287–480.

<sup>30</sup> Géza Papp, “Die Quellen der ‘Verbunkos-Musik’: Ein bibliographischer Versuch,” *Studia musicologica Academiae Hungaricae* 21, no. 2–4 (1979), 151–217; 24, no. 1–2 (1982), 35–97; 26, no. 1–4 (1984), 59–132; 32, no. 1–4 (1990), 55–224.

<sup>31</sup> Bellman, *Style hongrois*; Csilla Pethő, “Style hongrois: Hungarian Elements in the Works of Haydn, Beethoven, Weber and Schubert,” *Studia musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 41 (2000): 199–284; Shay Loya, *Liszt’s Transcultural Modernism and the Hungarian-Gypsy Tradition* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011); Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*.

<sup>32</sup> For her discussion of the complexities associated with the terms, see Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 35–45. For a discussion of the term *verbunkos*, see Loya, *Liszt’s Transcultural Modernism*, xii, 60–66; Catherine Mayes, “Reconsidering an Early Exoticism: Viennese Adaptations of Hungarian Gypsy Music around 1800,” *Eighteenth-Century Music* 6, no. 2 (2009): 161–81, at 165; Bence Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, trans. Sára Karig and Fred MacNicol; translation revised by Florence Knepler (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1974), 24–33. For the term *style hongrois*, see Bellman, *Style hongrois*, 11. For criticism of Bellman’s terms of “lexicon” and “style hongrois,” see Pethő’s “Style hongrois,” 199, 252–53, and Mayes, “Reconsidering,” 162–63, n. 7, respectively. The stance of *style hongrois* continues in subsequent studies, including Gerhard J. Winkler, “Der ‘Style hongrois’ in der europäischen Kunstmusik des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts,” in *Musik der Roma in Burgenland*, ed. Winkler (Eisenstadt: Burgenländische Landesregierung, 2003) and Maira Balacon, “Style hongrois Features in Brahms’s Hungarian Dances” (PhD diss., University of Cincinnati, 2005). For proposals of terms to replace *verbunkos* and *style hongrois*, see Mayes’s “Westernized Hungarian-Gypsy Music” in her “Reconsidering,” 162, n. 4 and Ralph P. Locke’s “Hungarian-Gypsy Music” in his *Musical Exoticism: Images and Reflections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 137.

is not clear-cut, because both Hungarian and non-Hungarian composers used many of the same kinds of stylistic markers with only subtle differences in use.<sup>33</sup>

Among the many other musical parameters that Liszt borrowed from Hungarian Gypsy-style music, I delve into his attentive approach to cimbalom playing. A number of studies have discussed Liszt's references to this instrument, yet the authors have examined them cursorily without sufficient understanding of the specific idioms of the instrument and Liszt's responses to those; moreover, the studies have focused more on composers after Liszt, who were familiar with the development of the modern cimbalom after 1873.<sup>34</sup> Part III of my study, which comprises Chapters 8 and 9, provides a deep understanding of contextual dimensions for the cimbalom and Liszt's connections to the instrument as well as his renderings of cimbalom playing.

Chapter 8 discusses the historical background of the instrument, as well as his own remarks about it in his *Des bohémiens* (1859) and his ongoing relationships with cimbalom players, makers, and pedagogues.<sup>35</sup> Contemporaneous articles about the cimbalom, "Die Musik der Ungarn" from *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1852) and the method book *Cimbalom iskola* (1886) by Géza Allaga, provide useful examples for exploring several essential techniques of the instrument.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For further discussions of the term, see Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 35–45.

<sup>34</sup> Bellman, "Toward a Lexicon for the *Style hongrois*," *Journal of Musicology* 9, no. 2 (spring 1991): 227–29; Richard Grimes, "The Evolution of the Concert Cimbalom" (PhD diss., New York University, School of Education, 2009); and John Astaire, "Searching for the Hungarian Cimbalom" (DMA document, Indiana University, 2010). The modern cimbalom invented by V. József Schunda in 1873 will be fleshed out in Chapter 8.

<sup>35</sup> *Des bohémiens*, 368–70; *Gipsy in Music*, 312–13.

<sup>36</sup> Gustav Pressel, "Die Musik der Ungarn," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 36, nos. 17–20 (1852): 189–92, 201–2, 213–17, 225–27. Issue no. 19, 215–16, in particular includes two specific examples of cimbalom technique in a slow section. Géza V. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola: három részben = Cimbal Schule, vorbereitender erster Theil*, Part I, ed. V. József Schunda (Budapest: Edition Neuma, 1886; reprinted, 1994).

Chapter 9 investigates Liszt's creative renderings of the cimbalom, categorized into seven salient features of the instrument's timbre and technique: (1) cimbalom shimmering and the tremolo; (2) cimbalom trills and their visual effect; (3) cimbalom flourishes and their distinctive contour; (4) cimbalom repetition and single-note hammering; (5) cimbalom repetition in fast sections and its percussive effect; (6) the cimbalom player and interaction with the violinist; and (7) cimbalom improvisation and *hallgató* style. All of Liszt's cimbalom evocations ultimately demonstrate how meticulously he expressed each technique and effect with a particular type of notation and how convincingly his reworking methods approximate the instrument's distinctive sounds and techniques, as well as its occasional interaction with other instruments. His reworkings create a skillful coalescence of sensitive attention to the integrity of the instrument and inventive pianistic solutions, portraying the cimbalom player vividly and bringing Gypsy-band performance to life.

The Conclusion summarizes the aesthetic purposes overlaying Liszt's transferral and reworking across Parts I–III. There are significant aspects of reworking techniques that recur throughout: his orchestral concept of sound, reinvigoration of virtuosic keyboard techniques, creation of visual effects, use of contrast and juxtaposition, and avoidance of rigid patterns. These aspects are all familiar from Liszt's piano compositions in general, yet their meaning becomes reinvigorated through the lens of his reworking process of instrumental music. The recurring techniques represent his search for effective pianistic solutions, in which he carefully deploys both fidelity and creativity as the two poles on a continuum. The dynamic of fidelity and creativity as a significant aesthetic underpinning is present not only on the local level of individual examples but

also in the large-scale picture of the repertoire considered in this study. If Liszt's orchestral arrangements in Part I and II represent his faithful approach to the models at the forefront and his artistic creativity underneath, his renderings of cimbalom playing in his Rhapsodies discussed in Part III are overtly free, yet his liberalness essentially stems from his scrupulous attempts to emulate particular techniques and effects of the instrument and, by extension, Gypsy bands. Part III, despite its different source material, thus offers an effective complement to the fidelity–creativity dynamic in the previous arrangements. In addition, Liszt's search for pianistic solutions to distinctive instruments continues throughout Parts I–III, relating the two disparate realms of music. The impulse behind the organization of this study thus lies in both contrast and correspondence across the entire repertoire.

# Part I. Liszt's Piano "*PARTITIONS*"

## Chapter 1

### "*Partitions de piano*"

#### Concept

Liszt used the term "*partition*" initially for his arrangement of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* (1833) in a letter to Adolphe Pietet in 1838:

If I am not mistaken, I am the one who first proposed a new method of transcription in my piano score of the *Symphonie fantastique*. I applied myself as scrupulously as if I were translating a sacred text to transferring, not only the symphony's musical framework, but also its detailed effects and the multiplicity of its instrumental and rhythmic combinations to the piano. The difficulty did not faze me, as my feeling for art and my love of it gave me double courage. . . . I called my work a *partition de piano* [piano score] in order to make clear my intention of following the orchestra step by step and of giving it no special treatment beyond the mass and variety of its sound.<sup>1</sup>

Through his designation of *partition*, Liszt explicitly claims that he is ushering in "a new method" for a piano arrangement by underscoring his fidelity to the original. By "following the orchestra step by step," he determines to remain unrelenting in his goal of "scrupulously" rendering the original as if treating it as a "sacred text." In addition to his adherence to the structure of the symphony ("the symphony's musical framework"), Liszt aims at capturing the nuanced, variegated effects of the orchestral sounds (the "detailed

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<sup>1</sup> The letter to Adolphe Pietet was first printed in the 11 February 1838 issue of the *Revue et Gazette musicale*, cited in Franz Liszt, *Pages romantiques*, ed. Jean Chantavoine (Paris: F. Alcan, 1912), 137–38; its German translation in *Gesammelte Schriften von Franz Liszt*, ed. La Mara, 6 vols. (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1880–83), 153; English translation of the passage cited in "Liszt's Transcriptions," in *NLA*, Book 18, xi; Lina Ramann, *Franz Liszt: Artist and Man*, 2 vols., trans. E. Coedery (London: W. H. Allen, 1882), II, 221; Franz Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, trans. Charles Suttoni (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 46. The English translation above follows Suttoni's; also cited in Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," 8.

effects” and “the mass and variety of [the orchestra]’s sound”) as well as the intricacy of the orchestral textures (the “multiplicity of its instrumental and rhythmic combinations”).

In the same letter to Pietet, Liszt also continues to discuss the compositional procedure and aesthetic underlying his *partition* of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique*, from which another group of his *partitions* of Beethoven’s symphonies is extrapolated, relating the two groups of arrangements to each other:

The procedure I followed for Berlioz’s symphony I am currently applying to those by Beethoven. The serious study of his works, a profound feeling for their virtually infinite beauty and for the piano’s resources, which have become familiar to me through constant practice, have perhaps made me less unfit than anyone for this laborious task.<sup>2</sup>

Liszt’s claim about the term *partition* and its meaning are further refined and bolstered in his preface to his arrangements of Beethoven’s Fifth and Sixth Symphonies (1840). The preface is a public announcement of the composer’s intentions underlying his set of arrangements of Beethoven Symphonies not only in his earlier ones of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh symphonies (1837–38) as well as the “Marcia Funebre” movement from the Third (1841), but also in his later ones of the remaining symphonies (1865) as well.<sup>3</sup> The most relevant portions of the preface for our purposes are as follows:

[1] The name of Beethoven is sacred in the Arts. Today his symphonies are universally recognized as masterpieces; whoever appreciates an earnest desire to expand his knowledge or even to create something new, can never reflect on and study these symphonies enough.

[2] By means of the immeasurable development of its harmonic intensity, the pianoforte attempts to gradually take possession of all orchestral compositions. In the breadth of its seven octaves, [the pianoforte] is able, with few exceptions, to reproduce all movements, all combinations, all figures of the most thorough and most profound sound creations, permitting the orchestra no other advantages than

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<sup>2</sup> Liszt, *Artist’s Journey*, 46.

<sup>3</sup> The later edition of Liszt’s Beethoven set in 1865 bears the same unaltered preface as the earlier edition of 1839. *NLA*, Book 18, xviii. Chapter 2 will further explain the chronology of Liszt’s arrangements of Beethoven’s symphonies as well as his Beethoven project in two separate periods.



the differences of the timbre and the plentiful effects—certainly advantages that are enormous.

[3] I hold my work as well done, if I have succeeded in transcribing not only the great outlines of Beethoven's composition, but also that of all details and smaller movements onto the pianoforte, which all meaningfully contribute in the completion of the whole. My goal has been achieved when I have done the same as the knowledgeable engraver and the conscientious translator, who can encompass the spirit of a work and thus contribute to the recognition of the great masters and to the education of the senses for the beautiful.<sup>4</sup>

The existing literature has drawn attention to the preface largely in three aspects, which have some parallels with those for the notion of *partition*: the validity and superiority of Liszt's arrangements, his experiments with the piano in accordance with technical improvements in the instrument, and most of all, his unwavering fidelity to Beethoven.<sup>5</sup> First, as in Paragraph [1], Liszt defends his craftsmanship in piano arrangements by establishing a new method of rendering Beethoven's symphonies, as opposed to the plethora of inept ones available at the time.<sup>6</sup> This view has frequently led most studies of the Liszt–Beethoven symphonies to focus on a comparison between Liszt's versions and others.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The preface was first printed in French and German with the date "Rome 1839" in Breitkopf & Härtel's edition of the piano arrangement of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in 1840; the original language was French: *NLA*, vol. 18, xviii. Liszt's preface probably originated in 1838: Alan Walker, *Franz Liszt*, II, 370, n. 16. See the entire preface in Appendix I. My translation is based on the German version.

<sup>5</sup> *NLe*, Book 18, after xxiv; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 131–32; Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,'" 250–51; Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," 5–6; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Transcriptions," 8–9.

<sup>6</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 135, argues that although Liszt did not name specific arrangers explicitly in his preface, he assessed the arrangements by his contemporary virtuosos brutally, as he once described Kalkbrenner's as "pitiful," whereas he considered his own arrangements as "different" from the contemporary ones: for the former, see his letter to Massart of February 1838 in Liszt, *L'artiste–Le clerc*, 41; and for the latter, see his letter of April 5, 1838 in Liszt, *Briefe*, I, 17–18. Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 137, also observes a compelling effect of the critique of 1840 on Kalkbrenner's arrangements in comparison with Liszt's set of the Beethoven *partitions*, suggesting that Liszt's method had become a standard for the critic to measure other piano arrangements.

<sup>7</sup> Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte'"; Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*." Cited and mentioned in the Introduction, n. 5.

Second, as in Paragraph [2], Liszt has faith in the capacity of the piano because of developments in the instrument.<sup>8</sup> Liszt argues that his constant experiments with the instrument have convinced him that the piano is capable of recreating the orchestra with “plentiful effects.” By taking into account the broader context of Liszt’s expansion of pianistic resources in the 1830s, a number of writings have been devoted to many instances of correspondence between Liszt’s pianistic figurations used in his early orchestral arrangements and in his other solo piano compositions of the time; these examples have primarily focused on the highly virtuosic figurations in relation to his brilliant performance career.<sup>9</sup>

Finally, in Paragraph [3], Liszt likens his role to a “knowledgeable engraver” and “conscientious translator,” immediately evoking typical nineteenth-century analogies of a piano arrangement to engraving and literary translation.<sup>10</sup> His resolve to become a faithful engraver or translator of Beethoven’s music helps establish him as the “Beethoven heir apparent.”<sup>11</sup> By explicitly stating his allegiance to Beethoven, Liszt

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<sup>8</sup> Liszt’s favorite Erard piano, for example, bears testimony to the technical advances in range from five or five and a half octaves to seven octaves, the advanced action and escapement, the more resilient tension in the strings, and the reinforcement of the case to accommodate the more voluminous sound. For an overview of technical improvements in the instrument, see David Rowland, “Piano and Pianists c. 1770–c. 1825” and “The Piano Since c. 1825,” in *The Cambridge Companion to The Piano*, ed. David Rowland (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 22–39 and 40–56, respectively; for Liszt’s pianos, see Kenneth Hamilton, “Performing Liszt’s Piano Music,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, ed. Hamilton (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 175–77; for Liszt’s continuous interest in the instrument’s developments and its impact on the market, see Reginald Gerig, “On Liszt’s Piano Technique,” in *New Light on Liszt and his Music*, ed. Michael Saffle and James Deaville (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1997), 253–70, at 260–61.

<sup>9</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 120–31.

<sup>10</sup> For a comprehensive discussion of reproduction theory in visual art and literary translation theory in parallel with the piano arrangement, particularly Liszt’s case, see the first chapter of Kregor’s *Liszt as Transcriber*.

<sup>11</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 132. Chapter 2 will discuss Liszt’s relationship with Beethoven throughout his lifelong Beethoven project.

strives to preserve the essence of the original in the utmost detail. This compositional aesthetic is shared with that underlying the notion of the *partition*.

The combination of Liszt's preface and his notion of *partition* is at the root of virtually every study of his arrangements of symphonies by Berlioz or Beethoven. The existing literature often considers a limited repertoire, mostly centered on Liszt's arrangements of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth symphonies. It posits Liszt's indefatigable fidelity to the original as a starting point for interpreting Liszt's transferral methods and their underlying purposes. Liszt's unremitting and unwavering fidelity to the "sacred text" of the original is certainly true, yet when it comes to analysis the current literature has focused almost exclusively on this aspect of Liszt's "photographic" approach, neglecting other aspects.

The focus on Liszt's "faithful" approach to the original has also spawned a tendency to separate it from his "creative" approach. For instance, as discussed in the Introduction, Walden Dale Hughes and William Michael Cory lay out their examples of Liszt's renderings largely in the two categories of "literal" and "non-literal" arrangement, viewing the "literal" as the side of Liszt's fidelity and the "non-literal" as the side of his creativity.<sup>12</sup> Hughes further relates Liszt's notion of *partition* entirely to the realm of faithfulness, seeing it as separate from the realm of creativity, and thus initiating a dichotomy between the two domains from the outset of his study.<sup>13</sup> Although both

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<sup>12</sup> Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions"; Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*"; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions." See the Introduction, n. 9.

<sup>13</sup> In his interpretation of Liszt's preface, Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Transcriptions," 7 claims that "[Liszt's] transcriptions of orchestral literature are measure-by-measure conversions from orchestral medium to solo piano." Despite his recognition of Liszt's artistry in arranging, his claim not only extends Liszt's Beethoven *partitions* too far into his "transcriptions of orchestral literature" but also relegates the concept of *partition* to "conversions" from orchestral score to piano score.

Hughes and Cory acknowledge Liszt's creative aspects in arranging, their twofold conception and organization ultimately set up distinction, contrast, and polarity between the two sides of reworking. A close inspection of Liszt's reworking process, however, reveals that these two sides are not mutually exclusive but interdependent, as will be substantiated in musical analyses throughout subsequent chapters.

In his compelling concept of "collaboration" between Berlioz and Liszt through the latter's *Symphonie fantastique* arrangement, Jonathan Kregor supports the concept by focusing on the tension, contest, and distinction between Berlioz's music and Liszt's creation of spectacle, describing it as "a persistent tug-of-war between composer and performer."<sup>14</sup> This distinction, in Kregor's interpretation, capitalizes on one of Liszt's compositional strategies that makes the transitional passages of the original his own material, creating another layer of distinction between static thematic statements and virtuosic transitional ones.<sup>15</sup> Kregor further relates this compositional method of Liszt to the composer's approach to his opera fantasies, as represented in his *Réminiscences de Don Juan*, in which his new material is highlighted between structurally important parts.<sup>16</sup> Kregor essentially sees Liszt's creativity as the equivalent of his original material as commonly found in his fantasies and *reminiscences*, extending the application of it to the creative side of the composer's reworkings in his orchestral arrangements. Kregor's view of such a tension and contrast between original and new, composer and arranger, composition and performance, and theme and transition ultimately implies a dichotomy between faithfulness and creativity. As will be revealed in the musical analyses, Liszt's

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<sup>14</sup> Kregor, "Collaboration and Content," in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 41–74, at 66.

<sup>15</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 67–69.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 67; his interpretation of Liszt's *Réminiscences de Don Juan* is based on Charles Rosen, *The Romantic Generation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), 528–40.

creativity is far more sophisticated than it seems on the surface. It is certainly true that Liszt often provides his own spectacle in the midst of his note-by-note rendering, yet behind the seemingly unique rendering often lie his assiduous efforts to capture the essence of the original.

Liszt's remarks on the *partition* have also led a number of scholars to generalize the characteristics of the *partitions* as a group by seeing them as simply faithful renderings down to the smallest detail of the original. This prevailing tendency has stressed Liszt's faithfulness as a cornerstone of his craft of arrangement, not only in the *partitions* of the symphonies by Berlioz and Beethoven but also in the whole group of *partitions*, with little consideration of the elements that distinguish one from the other. The editors of the *Neue Liszt Ausgabe*, for instance, have noted the arrangements in the category of *partition* as piano scores following the original "faithfully," "exactly, almost note for note," and "in the greatest detail."<sup>17</sup> Maurice Hinson also defines the "*partition*" as "literally an exact replica of the original" with only a change of instrumentation.<sup>18</sup>

The current view about Liszt's *partitions* as a whole has also affected the categorization of the *partitions* in the spectrum of Liszt's entire oeuvre of his arrangements. It conveniently treats the *partitions* as a whole in contrast with free arrangements such as *paraphrases*, *fantaisies*, *réminiscences*, and *illustrations*—although there have also been attempts to distinguish those terms.<sup>19</sup> The simple dichotomy between *partitions* and *paraphrase/fantasies* ultimately generates a one-dimensional

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<sup>17</sup> *NLA*, vol. 16, xiii; vols. 17–19, xiv.

<sup>18</sup> Maurice Hinson, "Preface," in *The Pianist's Guide to Transcriptions, Arrangements, and Paraphrases* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), x.

<sup>19</sup> For further discussion of Liszt's use of a variety of terms for piano transcriptions and arrangements, see the sources cited in the Introduction, n. 14.

perspective of Liszt's arrangements as a corollary: whether a particular arrangement falls into the category of a "faithful transcription" or a "free arrangement."

It is necessary to understand Liszt's particular designation *partition* as a distinctive concept of his transferral process both on the surface and on a deeper level. It is also important to consider the concept by not only taking the *partitions* as a whole but also investigating individual groups within the *partitions*. Revisiting the list of Liszt's *partitions* of orchestral music in his thematic catalog of 1877, as delineated earlier in Table 1 in the introduction and reproduced in Table 3 below, helps us again to gain insight into each group of *partitions*.

Table 3. Liszt's Piano *partitions* of Symphonies and Overtures

Source composer	Composition	Date
Ludwig van Beethoven	Symphonies 5–7	1837–38
	"Marcia Funebre" from No. 3	1841
	Symphonies 1–4 (except "Marcia Funebre"), 8, 9	1863
Hector Berlioz	<i>Roi Lear</i> Overture	1831
	<i>Francs-Juges</i> Overture	1833
	<i>Symphonie fantastique</i> (1 <sup>st</sup> edition)	1834
Gioachino Rossini	<i>Guillaume Tell</i> Overture	1838
Carl Maria von Weber	<i>Oberon</i> Overture	early 1840s
	<i>Der Freischütz</i> Overture	early 1840s
	<i>Jubel</i> Overture	1846

Although Liszt did not employ the term *partition* in a systematic fashion in his catalogue, the group of *partitions* in Table 3 generally shares two elements.<sup>20</sup> First, the

<sup>20</sup> As mentioned earlier in the Introduction, the majority of his *partitions* are faithful arrangements of orchestral compositions by others, but there is also a free arrangement of an excerpt from a symphony in

original compositions are large-scale orchestral music, symphonies or overtures, which Liszt transferred to his piano score—in this case, exclusively a score for solo piano, not for two pianos or four hands.<sup>21</sup> The original compositions in the group of *partitions* in Liszt's catalogue of 1877 also include chamber music such as Beethoven and Hummel's sextets, not included in Table 3, yet the change of medium in the transferral is still a significant point. In addition, the orchestral music far outnumbers the ensemble music in the originals of his piano *partitions*. Second, based on his remarks about the term *partition* as well as his preface to his Beethoven project, Liszt explicitly distinguished his *partitions* from other arrangements in that the *partitions* follow the originals with exceptional detail and depth. The two elements that help define the concept of *partition* of Table 3 are thus the change of medium from large-scale orchestral music to solo-piano score and the particular type of transferral and reworking that stresses the arranger's scrupulous attention to the original.

Liszt's concept of *partition* is challenging and problematic. It requires the arranger's skill to adjust the original medium to the new one, while demanding that the arranger make the score sound just like the original. It challenges pianist-composer-arrangers to approximate multiple instruments with their ten fingers, while preserving their adherence to the utmost detail of the original. As discussed earlier, the prevailing view of the *partition* has emphasized that Liszt's *partitions* strictly follow the originals in

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the arrangement of the *Marche de pèlerins* from Berlioz's *Harold en Italie*, and a paraphrase-type reworking of the fourth movement, *Marche au supplice*, from Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*.

<sup>21</sup> Although I have proposed the term *partition* here confined to a solo-piano score of orchestral music, at the same time I will expand the term to referring to Liszt's two-piano arrangements of his own orchestral music in Part II, in keeping with his meticulous and virtuosic approach to the original as in his previous *partitions* and also in contrast with other contemporary arrangements for two pianos and four hands. This issue will be further discussed in Chapter 6 of Part II.

a measure-for-measure manner without casting any doubt on whether they in fact do. In other words, the view suggests that Liszt imposed no additions or deletions on the structure, and generally remained faithful to the original melody and harmonic progression. Indeed, in listening to such a meticulous arrangement of the orchestral score, one may certainly have the impression of a scrupulously literal rendering. One may be even persuaded that the arrangement is a simple reproduction of the original.

Paradoxically, from the process of making the piano score sound like the model orchestral score emerges not simply the arranger's static act of replicating the original with "photographic" precision; what makes it successful is the arranger's dynamic involvement in reworking the original to offer convincing solutions appropriate for the new medium. A detailed investigation of Liszt's arrangements, as we will observe, demonstrates that his transferring process actually involves various kinds of modifications, reworkings, and even transformations in order to interweave the orchestral textures into the piano score and approximate the orchestral effects and sonorities in pianistic terms.

The issue of faithfulness and creativity in the field of arrangement has received attention from a number of scholars and musicians in different directions. In a cultural context, Jonathan Kregor provides a useful background for understanding Liszt's act of arranging by delving into the development of literary translation in the early nineteenth century and the advances of art-reproduction techniques in the 1830s in Paris.<sup>22</sup> In his discussion of Liszt's arrangement of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, in particular, Kregor likens Liszt's relationship with Berlioz to that between the Parisian artist and

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<sup>22</sup> Kregor, "Models and Methods," in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 9–40.



printmaker. Just as the prints could heighten certain aspects of the original, Liszt also paid attention to some salient accompaniment figurations of Berlioz's symphony, bringing out new significance in the original.<sup>23</sup> Kregor's discussions eventually lead us to focus on Liszt's creativity over his faithfulness by describing the former as his "unique moments" or even his "act of violation" of the original.<sup>24</sup>

In his writings and compositions Ferruccio Busoni uses the term "transcription" (*Transkription*) not only in a conventional sense of transferal from one medium to another, but also to denote the transferral of an abstract musical concept ("Einfall") into notation during composition, or from notation into sound during performance.<sup>25</sup> For the conventional type of "transcription," Busoni also uses another term, "Übertragung," which is interchangeable with the term "Transkription" in his oeuvre.<sup>26</sup> The term "Übertragung" means "translation" in a literary sense from one language to another; in Busoni's sense, it involves a degree of interpretation, because literal translation in a word-for-word manner is incapable of conveying the original intent and meaning.<sup>27</sup> Extrapolated from his view about the translator's role in "Übertragung" emerges the proper role of an arranger, who is required to go beyond a measure-for-measure approach to the original in order to capture the integrity of the original successfully.

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<sup>23</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 46–49, provides examples of how Liszt captures the characteristic leaping figuration in the accompaniment of the *idée fixe* in each movement of the symphony and how his renderings heighten the figuration to call our attention to his performance.

<sup>24</sup> For a discussion of Liszt's "unique moments," see Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, passim; for the phrase "act of violation," see *ibid.*, 4.

<sup>25</sup> Erinn Elizabeth Knyt, "Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work: Permutations and Possibilities" (PhD. diss., Stanford University, 2010), 138; also see Knyt, "Ferruccio Busoni and the Absolute in Music: Form, Nature and Idee," *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 137, no. 1 (2012): 35–69.

<sup>26</sup> Knyt, "Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work," 137–52.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 138–39.

Busoni's latter concept of "transcription" represents his famous and audacious claim that virtually every aspect of music-making is an outcome of "transcription" through its successive stages from initial thought through notation to performance.<sup>28</sup> The important issue for our current discussion is the role of the performer that Busoni stresses. Busoni considers the performance as a type of "transcription" because it involves the translation of the written text into sound; in this process, the performer's task is to interpret the signs dictated by the composer's notation and reinvigorate them with his or her own perspective, bringing life to the abstract musical idea from its static notated state.<sup>29</sup> From the perspective of Busoni, arrangers are also required to display their elastic concept of transferal by enlivening an otherwise static replica of the original through their creative ability.

In his generic discussion of "transcription," Stephen Davies unites the two poles of fidelity and creativity into a "single act" in both performance and transcription.<sup>30</sup> By likening the transcriber's role to the performer's—which immediately recalls Busoni's remarks above—Davies claims that both transcriber and performer eventually share a concern that is "essentially creative in pursuing the goal of interpreting faithfully the composer's text."<sup>31</sup> In other words, the performer's creativity involves the transformation of the "notes-as-written into the notes-as-sound," whereas the

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<sup>28</sup> Ferruccio Busoni, *The Essence of Music and Other Papers*, trans. Rosamund Ley (New York: Dover, 1987, c1957), 87–88; Busoni, *Sketch of a New Aesthetic of Music*, trans. Theodore Baker (New York: G. Schirmer, 1911), 84–85. Knyt, "Ferruccio Busoni and the Ontology of the Musical Work," 110, discusses this issue based on Busoni's *Sketch*.

<sup>29</sup> Busoni, *Sketch*, 85, describes the performer's role thus: to "resolve the rigidity of the signs into the primitive emotion . . . it is the part of interpretation to raise it and reendow it with its primordial essence."

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Davies, "Transcription, Authenticity and Performance," *British Journal of Aesthetics* 28 (1988): 224.

<sup>31</sup> Davies, "Transcription," 222.

transcriber's creativity stems from his adaptation of the original suitable for a new medium.<sup>32</sup> Both performance and transcription, according to Davies, take faithfulness to the original composer's intentions as one of their primary goals, although they constitute "intrinsically creative activity."<sup>33</sup> Although his discussions lack specific contextual, analytical, and interpretative evidence to support his claim, Davies aptly encapsulates a fundamental problem intrinsic to the piano arrangement, which bears witness to the difficulty in drawing a clear-cut boundary between fidelity and creativity.

Liszt's deliberate choice of the term *partition* situates his exceptional scrupulousness explicitly in the forefront of his transferral. Behind his overt fidelity lies his creativity in providing convincing solutions to the problems inherent in the transferral. Concurrently, his creative renderings, which are immediately striking in the midst of his overall faithful approach, may be Liszt's "act of violation toward the original," as Kregor argues.<sup>34</sup> But the driving force of many of those creative renderings stems from his conscientious attention to the original orchestral sounds and effects, as the musical examples will further substantiate in subsequent chapters. Liszt's *partition*, therefore, represents the pinnacle of his overt fidelity to the original and thus the validity of his unimpeachable status as an arranger. And yet it simultaneously reveals his concealed creativity through his unceasing and painstaking compositional process in order to offer a convincing outcome in pianistic terms. An investigation of specific examples has already been undertaken (see the introduction),<sup>35</sup> yet the examples in this study will not only

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 222, 224.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 222.

<sup>34</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> Hughes, "Transcriptions of Orchestral Literature"; Cory, "Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*"; Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte'"; Schröter, "*Der Name Beethoven*."

provide a wider spectrum of Liszt's multifaceted reworkings but also focus on the seemingly paradoxical dynamic of fidelity and creativity intrinsic to Liszt's transferral, in which the two aspects are in fact interdependent.

If we relate the concept of *partition* to a dynamic interaction of fidelity and creativity, and if we apply this concept to the entire group of compositions under the name *partitions*, as delineated in Table 3, one of the issues that arises is whether we should regard these compositions as variants of a single form of *partition*, or consider each an individual case. We have already observed that Liszt applied the compositional procedure that is specifically related to his designation of *partition* to both his *Symphonie fantastique* and his earlier set of Beethoven's symphonies. Can, then, this procedure be similarly extrapolated to his other *partitions*, including his arrangements of overtures by Berlioz, Rossini, and Weber? Cases like these demand an investigation to uncover the extent to which, and manner in which, the composer has used the same kind of existing orchestral music.

From investigating each of Liszt's *partitions* in detail there emerge the ways in which Liszt used a distinctive compositional strategy that both links all of the *partitions* and simultaneously distinguishes them. All of them are identifiable as a particular group of orchestral arrangements reliant on his notion of "*partition*." But at the same time, because he regards the music of Berlioz as a "sacred text" and applies the same aesthetic goal to the music of Beethoven, the two groups of the Berlioz and Beethoven arrangements represent Liszt's deeper involvement in his conscientious project than the other groups of *partitions* with respect to the extent of his overt fidelity, including carefully inscribed notational devices and attention to detail. The arrangements of

Berlioz's overtures align themselves with the *partitions* of a "sacred text," because Liszt undertook them around the same time as his earlier *partitions* of Beethoven's symphonies in 1837 and also because his relationship with Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* in the early 1830s continued in the second half of the decade.<sup>36</sup>

The later groups of *partitions* of overtures by Rossini and Weber, however, may be distinguished from the earlier *partitions*. One of the reasons resides in the fact that, although they still demonstrate advocacy of fidelity to the original, some of the individual features in Liszt's reworking make them diverge from the earlier *partitions*. For instance, Liszt's arrangement of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* overture entails reworkings that evoke his paraphrase techniques, such as are found more frequently in his contemporaneous song transcriptions. In addition, his arrangements of Weber's overtures eliminate the meticulous instrumental cues completely, as will be further discussed below and in Chapter 5, deviating from the essential characteristics of the *partition* from the outset.

From these differences emerges the impulse behind the focus and organization of this study of the group of *partitions*. The focus of the notational issues in the next section is drawn from the *partitions* of "sacred texts," the Berlioz and Beethoven arrangements, which display more copious, conspicuous, and characteristic devices in notation than other *partitions*. Chapters 2 and 3 then discuss the *partitions* of Beethoven's orchestral music first and then those of Berlioz's. If Liszt's renderings of orchestral music by Beethoven and Berlioz are associated with the "sacred text" *partitions* in accordance with his *partition* project, the Berlioz and Beethoven *partitions* are in turn distinguishable

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<sup>36</sup> *NLA*, Book 16, xiii–xv; Diana Bickley, "The Concert Overtures," in *The Cambridge Companion to Berlioz* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), ed. Peter Bloom, 69–80, at 70; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 55. Liszt's relationship with Berlioz during the 1830s will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

from the Rossini and Weber *partitions* in the “reassessing” of the *partitions* in Chapters 4 and 5.

## **Meticulous Notation**

### *Detailed Instrumental Cues*

Liszt’s meticulous approach to notation distinguishes his *partitions* from the typical orchestral arrangement. Previous assessments of Liszt’s detailed notation have focused on his specific designations of instruments, based on his letter to Breitkopf & Härtel in 1863:

By the title of *Partition de Piano* (which is to be retained and translated into German as “Clavier-Partitur” or “Pianoforte-Partitur”?) I wish to indicate my intention to combine the performer’s wit with the effects of the orchestra and to make the different sonorities and nuances felt within the restricted possibilities of the piano. . . . For this aim I have often indicated the names of the instruments: oboe, clarinet, timpani, etc. as well as the contrasts of the string and wind instruments. It would undoubtedly be strangely ridiculous to pretend that these designations are sufficient for transferring the magic of the orchestra to the piano; nevertheless, I don’t regard them as superfluous. Apart from their rare utility as instructions, the pianist of some intelligence can use them for getting accustomed to accenting and grouping the motives, to making the main ones stand out and suppressing the auxiliary ones: in a word, to adapting himself to the norm of the orchestra.<sup>37</sup>

Before discussing his instrumental cues, it is worth noting that this letter of 1863 cited above came when Liszt embarked on the completion of his *partitions* of the entire symphonies of Beethoven, a quarter of a century later than his earlier set of Beethoven

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<sup>37</sup> Liszt, *Franz Liszts Briefe*, ed. La Mara, II, 47, the letter dated Rome, 28 August [18]63; the original French version cited in Domokos, ““Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,”” 285; an English translation in La Mara, ed., *Letters of Franz Liszt*, trans. Constance Bache (New York: Haskell House, 1968), 57–58, as well as in *Neue Ausgabe* XI, xviii–xviii. The translation here combines the two sources: the first five lines up to the phrase “restricted possibilities of the piano” come from *NAL*, xi; the remainder follows La Mara, *Letters*, 57–58.

*partitions* (1837–1841). By using the same title “*Partition de Piano*” and the same preface for his later set of Beethoven *partitions*,<sup>38</sup> Liszt proposes to continue to pursue the same aesthetic purpose underlying the concept of “*partition*” as in his earlier *partitions* of a “sacred text.” His carefully inscribed instrumental cues thus emerge from part of his project of *partitions*.

Based on his own remark above, the existing literature has discussed the use of Liszt’s specific instrumental cues largely in two respects: (1) it represents his aspiration to be faithful to the original and his microscopic attention to the original composer’s intentions; and (2) it also reveals his attempt to communicate with the pianist or reader by giving information about the instrumentation of the original orchestral score and thus assisting in projecting its essence.<sup>39</sup> Along with these prevailing views, Liszt’s meticulous cues for instruments represent his awareness that the piano does not have the advantage of the distinct timbres of the various orchestral instruments. Many critics and reviewers of Liszt’s time deplored the lack of orchestral colors in piano arrangements.<sup>40</sup> To take but one famous example, E. T. A. Hoffmann, in his review of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony, made the analogy of a piano arrangement to a black-and-white sketch of an oil painting.<sup>41</sup> In Hoffman’s sense, the piano arrangement, like the sketch, provides an

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<sup>38</sup> For the use of the same preface, see the earlier discussion of “*Partitions de piano*,” n. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Domokos, “Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,” 285; Hughes, “Liszt’s Solo Piano Transcriptions,” 58.

<sup>40</sup> Among a number of anecdotes, see Christensen, “Four-Hand Transcription,” 274–75.

<sup>41</sup> E. T. A. Hoffmann, *E. T. A. Hoffmann’s Music Writings*, ed. David Charlton and trans. Martyn Clarke (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 251; the original review was published in *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 12, no. 4 (4 July 1810): 630–42 and no. 41 (11 July 1810): 652–59. Also discussed and cited in Christensen, “Four-Hand Transcription,” 274.

outline of the original music but is not capable of conveying its colors and sounds in depth.<sup>42</sup>

The lack of colors was not always a fatal defect, however, if it was aided by instrumental cues. To take a well-known example, Robert Schumann found the instrumental designations laudable and useful when he undertook his famous review of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* based solely on Liszt's arrangement of the symphony, as he began his praise for Liszt's arrangement by calling it "one that indicates the most important details of instrumentation."<sup>43</sup> Schuman reiterated his support for the instrumental cues in his reviews of a four-hand piano arrangement of a symphony by Karl Reissiger, suggesting the addition of cues: "If we add to this [arrangement] as correct and euphonious an instrumentation as might be expected from an experienced chapel-master, and remember that the symphony is written in the good orchestral key of E-flat major, we shall have a tolerably good idea of it."<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, in his assessment of Liszt's *partitions* of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth symphonies in 1840, G. W. Fink notes that "throughout the whole work all orchestra instruments are indicated with great precision." He regards the instrumental cues as "an advantage, almost an obligation, which no arrangement of an orchestral work for the pianoforte should lack."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Christensen, "Four-Hand Transcription," 274.

<sup>43</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," in *Hector Berlioz: Fantastic Symphony*, Norton Critical Scores, ed. and trans. Edward T. Cone (New York & London: W. W. Norton, 1971), 220–48, at 233. Schumann's assessment of Liszt's arrangement will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

<sup>44</sup> Schumann, *Music and Musicians*, 44.

<sup>45</sup> G. W. Fink, "Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt: (1) Symphonies de Beethoven. Partition de Piano. No. V et VI," *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 42, no. 15 (April, 1840): 305–308, at 308. "Endlich sind durch das ganze Werk die Orchesterinstrumente mit grosser Genauigkeit angegeben, ein Vorzug, ja eine Pflichtleistung, die in keiner Übertragung irgend eines Orchesterwerkes für das Pianoforte fehlen sollte."



Liszt himself also acknowledged the lack of colors on the keyboard, at the same time having his faith in the piano's capability to compensate for it. In his letter of 1838 to Adolph Pietet, Liszt stated: "even if it [the piano] does not reproduce the colors, it at least reproduces the light and shadow."<sup>46</sup> In his preface to his Beethoven *partitions*, as discussed earlier, he mentioned among the "advantages" of the piano that is capable of producing the "differences of the timbre and the plentiful effects." Liszt was not the first composer–pianist to inscribe instrumental cues carefully on the piano score. A critic for *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* in 1832 already regarded the cues as a "novel innovation" in his review of Christian Brunner's four-hand arrangement of two symphonies by Mozart.<sup>47</sup> Arrangers of Liszt's time occasionally inserted instrumental cues. For instance, in Ernst Rudorff's two-piano arrangement of Ignaz Moscheles's Piano Concerto in G Minor, Op. 58, the cues help the second pianist to gain a fuller sense of the orchestral part and play the role of the accompaniment well in a concerto.<sup>48</sup> Whereas the instrumental cues previously were used sporadically, confined to the prominent instruments, or stem from a practical concern for the second piano's accompaniment, Liszt's use of the instrumental designations constitutes an essential element of his *partition* project. As made clear by his remark about the instrument cues cited above, Liszt believes that the instrumental cues should be considered not "superfluous" but an integral part of transferring the orchestra to the piano.

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<sup>46</sup> Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, trans. Suttoni, 45; also cited in Huschke, "Zum Kultur," 97.

<sup>47</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 34, no. 2 (11 January 1832), 32; cited in Christensen, "Four-Hand Transcription," 264, n. 31. In fact, Christensen claims that in the repertoire of four-hand piano arrangements after midcentury there is an increasing tendency for arrangers to use instrumental cues for prominent parts in their arrangements.

<sup>48</sup> Ignaz Moscheles, Piano Concerto No. 3 in G Minor, Op. 58, arranged for two pianos by Ernst Rudorff (Leipzig: Steingräber, n. d.).

As illustrated in Example 1.1, Liszt's use of the instrumental cues helps the reader or performer to grasp the constant shift of instrumental timbres of the original. Otherwise, this passage would be simply transferred to a series of monotonously repeating patterns on the keyboard. With the aid of the cues, however, each unit of the repeating pattern is distinguishable from each other due to the individual instrumental timbres.

Example 1.1. *Roi Lear*, mm. 276–93, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 1.1, measures 276–288, is presented in three systems. The first system (measures 276–281) includes cues for Fl. Cl. (Flute and Clarinet), Vc. Cb. (Violoncello and Contrabasso), and Vl. (Violin). Dynamics include *p* (piano), *sf* (sforzando), and *cresc. poco a poco* (crescendo poco a poco). The second system (measures 282–287) includes cues for Cl. (Clarinet), Trb. (Trumpet), and Trb. Fg. (Trumpet and Fagotto). Dynamics include *sf*, *p*, and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The third system (measures 288–293) includes cues for Fiati (Flutes) and Vl. (Violin). Dynamics include *sf*, *p*, and *mf*, with the instruction *sempre più cresc.* (sempre più crescendo).

Although Example 1.1 imparts to the pianist the detailed cues in order to help understand the original fully, the issue that arises at the same time is whether Liszt is using the cues simply as an informative tool. To put it in another way, what does he expect the pianist to do with the cues in his or her execution? Is the pianist simply imagining the individual instrument(s)? Taking another look at his remark about instrumental cues in his letter of 1838 cited above, it is noteworthy that Liszt expresses

his wish to “combine the performer’s wit with the effects of the orchestra” through his detailed designations. In this regard, the specific instrumental cues bring up the question of how he would have expected a capable pianist to follow the cues about the sonority of the orchestra and still bring off an effective performance.

Liszt often attempted to produce a particular instrumental sonority on the keyboard in performance. In his preface to his set of Beethoven symphony arrangements, Liszt said that he believed the piano is capable of producing variegated orchestral sounds, aspiring to expand the piano’s ability to equal status with the orchestra. Liszt’s experiments with instrumental sonorities on the keyboard are also evident from several anecdotes about his teaching. According to Madame Auguste Boissier’s report of his teaching in 1832, for example, Liszt urged his pupil Valérie, Boissier’s daughter, to envision the sound of one particular instrument on the keyboard: “he [Liszt] showed her [Valérie] how to pluck arpeggios, with emphasis on the last note, so that a harp sound would be produced.”<sup>49</sup> August Göllerich, an Austrian conductor and writer on music and one of the older Liszt’s favorite pupils, recorded the contents of master classes with Liszt during the period 1884–86.<sup>50</sup> According to Göllerich, Liszt gave an instruction to his student that “the theme must sound penetrating, like the sound of the trumpet.”<sup>51</sup> This anecdote suggests that when Liszt expected to hear a certain sound from the piano, he likened the sound to that of an individual instrument.

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<sup>49</sup> Elyse Mach, ed., “Liszt *Pédagogue*: A Diary of Franz Liszt as Teacher 1831–32 by Madame Auguste Boissier,” in *The Liszt Studies: Essential Selections from the Original 12-Volume Set of Technical Studies for the Piano* (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1973), xiii, Liszt’s soirée, dated 19 January 1832.

<sup>50</sup> August Göllerich, *The Piano Master Classes of Franz Liszt, 1884–1886*, ed. Wilhelm Jerger, trans. and ed. Richard Louis Zimdars (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1996).

<sup>51</sup> Göllerich, *Piano Master Classes*, 72, lesson on 27 June 1885, performance of Schubert–Liszt, *Hungarian March* [from *Mélodies hongroises*].

Extrapolating from the anecdotes just quoted, we may assume that Liszt would have demanded from a pianist a certain articulation and touch appropriate for an individual instrument in his orchestral arrangements. Another of Göllicher's accounts offers insight into Liszt's intentions behind his instrumental cues and their rendering in performance. Liszt comments as follows on the rendering of the horn *staccatos* in his arrangement of the Allegretto movement from Beethoven's Seventh Symphony:

Here be guided exactly by the indicated instrument groups, for that is why they are indicated; this business is not done ineptly. . . . A staccato from the horns naturally always sounds more sustained than from the other instruments; you must also play it that way.<sup>52</sup>

Liszt was well aware that various articulations of *staccato* are available on the piano, and from them he attempted to select a specific type of *staccato* appropriate for the horn. In sum, Liszt endeavored to emulate individual instruments through his experimentation with pianistic resources: a particular articulation and touch. Despite the keyboard's restricted range of tone compared with an orchestra, the pianist is required to observe Liszt's specific instrumental cues and render the passage under the cues in a nuanced manner, ultimately attempting to evoke individual instruments of the orchestra. He therefore did not simply envision the instrumental cues as an informative device but demanded pianists to display their "wit" in rendering individual instruments.

*Liszt's detailed instrument cues in the context of his orchestral arrangements*

In the spectrum of Liszt's arrangements of orchestral music, his use of detailed instrumental cues is often regarded as a distinctive marker of the group of "*partitions*."

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<sup>52</sup> Göllicher, *Piano Master Classes*, 83–84; also noted in *NLA*, Book 18, xix.

This repertoire comprises his solo-piano arrangements of Beethoven symphonies (1837–1841 and 1865), Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* and his three overtures (1830s), and Rossini’s *Guillaume Tell Overture* (1838). Yet this view is somewhat of a misreading considering the drastic simplification of the cues in the Liszt–Rossini *partition* and their complete disappearance in the arrangements of Weber’s overtures (1846)—although these are categorized under “*partition*” like the previous ones in Liszt’s 1877 catalogue (see Table 3). We therefore need to correct erroneous assertions about Liszt’s use of the detailed instrumental cues in his *partitions* in particular and his orchestral arrangements in general. The issue of Liszt’s selection of instrumental cues will be further contextualized in the entirety of his orchestral arrangements in Chapter 5, which concludes our study of his *partitions* for solo piano with the arrangements of Weber’s overtures.

### *Performance and Expressive Markings*

Throughout his *partitions*, particularly those of a “sacred text,” Liszt often expanded the specific instrumental cues into scrupulous prose instructions to the performer. As indicated by his “Remarks for the copyist and the engraver” on the manuscript of his completion of the Beethoven symphony arrangements in 1863, he wanted certain types of his notational devices to be strictly observed.<sup>53</sup> His control of notation thus extends beyond his meticulous cues for instruments into everything he put in the score. To gain a fuller insight into Liszt’s *partitions*, therefore, it is necessary to investigate his plethora of

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<sup>53</sup> *NLA*, Book 18, xix, investigates the autography instructions, which include examples of Liszt’s emphasis on the “double markings” in the right and left hands that are “not superfluous and must be precisely put,” as well as his instruction of the “stems up[-] and downward, upper and lower staves,” which “must be retained exactly as it is given in the manuscript.”

notational aids, including performance directions, fingerings, and expressive and dynamic markings, as well as additional staves and three-staved notation. Although the notational issue will be substantiated in the musical analyses in subsequent chapters, the following discussions indicate some of the notable characteristics of Liszt's notational devices.

Before exploring the notation used in his *partitions*, it is essential to understand Liszt's individual approach to notation in the broad context of early nineteenth-century piano notation, especially by virtuoso pianist-composers. The driving force behind Liszt's novel notation in the 1830s can then be seen as part of various attempts to improve notation at the time. David Rowland has investigated piano notation in Paris during the era of Chopin and Liszt by drawing on the Parisian journal *Le Pianiste*, published from 1833 to 1835, as well as diverse other sources.<sup>54</sup> Comments in those sources reveal that the notation was inadequate to indicate the subtleties desired in performances. The acknowledgement of such notational limitations prompted virtuoso pianists to experiment with notation.

Piano notation also developed side by side with two more elements: advances in the instrument that helped expand the keyboard's range; and the phenomenon of virtuoso public performances, which inspired different types of playing with a wide range of dynamics and greater tempo fluctuation.<sup>55</sup> In response, each of the virtuoso pianist-composers sought out an individual approach to notation. Liszt was one of the progressive composers in the vanguard of this experimentation. Not only did he use the famous rectangular sign for *tenuto* in his *Grandes Études* published in 1839, he also

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<sup>54</sup> David Rowland, "Piano Notation in Chopin and Liszt's Paris," in "*Grandeur et finesse*": *Chopin, Liszt and the Parisian Musical Scene*, ed. Luca Sala (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 111–24.

<sup>55</sup> Rowland, "Piano Notation," 113.

deployed various signs for tempo fluctuation—including a series of lines and boxes to indicate grades of *ritardandos* and *accelerandos* in his first *Apparition* (1834).<sup>56</sup>

In addition, piano notation may be characterized as “prescriptive” rather than “descriptive” according to Charles Seeger’s definitions: the former is subjective and portrays only an approximation of the resulting sound in performance, whereas the latter is objective and represents graphically the sounds that are heard.<sup>57</sup> Piano notation seen as “prescriptive” demonstrates many instances of illogic, because there is often a disparity between the notation and actual practice of a pianist. For example, if a notation requires a quick release of a certain note and at the same time prolonging it by a pedal, that is illogical on the surface but becomes logical in execution if we consider what the performer actually does.<sup>58</sup> In this regard, the “performer’s wit” continues to play an important role in Liszt’s carefully designed notational devices throughout; in some instances when there is incongruity between his notation and the actual sound, the devices invite further explanation, with which we will now engage by means of musical analysis.

Liszt’s experiments with notation are also viewed as his attempt to transfer as much of his performance style to the score as possible.<sup>59</sup> Kenneth Hamilton emphasizes the importance of Liszt’s performance directions not only to his compositional and performance style but also to the intended musical effect of the composition; for instance,

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<sup>56</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 64.

<sup>57</sup> Charles Seeger, “Prescriptive and Descriptive Music-Writing,” *Musical Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (1958): 184–95. Although prescriptive and descriptive notation are two contrasting uses of music writing, Seeger, 187, points out that the two are not necessarily incompatible. Part of Rowland’s discussion in his “Piano Notation” also draws on Seeger’s distinction.

<sup>58</sup> Rowland, “Piano Notation,” 123, uses an example of Chopin’s pedal markings in his Variations, Op. 2, *Alla Polacca*, m. 31.

<sup>59</sup> Hamilton, “Performing Liszt’s Piano Music,” 172; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 64.

the direction *Andante con moto* for the “Invocation” from the *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* is sometimes interpreted as “fairly placid” (in Hamilton’s words) but also as “fast and fiery” (in Göllicherich’s words).<sup>60</sup> Hamilton ultimately warns performers to take Liszt’s markings fully into account in their playing in order to preserve his compositional and his performing intentions. Similarly, Jonathan Kregor suggests that Liszt’s scrupulous markings represent his careful control over the written text, providing the performer “little latitude for independence” in performance and interpretation.<sup>61</sup> In the context of his notational experiments in the early 1830s, Liszt’s assiduous efforts to accurately notate music stem from his attempts to record as much of his own performing style on the score as possible.

It is no coincidence that the copious varied and detailed markings in Liszt’s *partitions* have a parallel with his expansion of traditional markings during the first half of the 1830s, as discussed above. Throughout his orchestral arrangements, the expressivity and richness of his markings enable Liszt to preserve much of the original in the transferral process, while documenting his own performance manner and also offering his reinterpretation of the original. In the case of Liszt’s arrangement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique*, Kregor makes the compelling argument that Liszt’s abundant markings represent his individual approach to combining “reproduced music” and “re-

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<sup>60</sup> Hamilton, “Performing Liszt’s Piano Music,” 180–81; Göllicherich, *Piano Master Classes*, 140.

<sup>61</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 64. He provides examples of a series of lines and boxes to represent *ritardandos* and *accelerandos* in Liszt’s *Apparition* from 1834 as well as the precise marking of beat divisions under each note in *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses*. Kregor, op. cit., 66, also furnishes a convincing example from Liszt’s arrangement of the second movement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* in which the pianist should preserve Liszt’s leaping figure in one hand in order to create the spectacle of the moment as the composer would have intended.



created performance,” helping to give advice to the listener or reader by means of his prose text itself.<sup>62</sup>

Among the *partitions* under consideration here, Liszt’s performance and expressive markings are far more prevalent in the *partitions* of orchestral music by Berlioz, particularly that of the *Symphonie fantastique*, and by Beethoven than in the others. As illustrated in Example 1.2, the abundance of detailed markings immediately catches our attention.

Example 1.2. *Symphonie fantastique*, I, mm. 274–92, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 1.2, *Symphonie fantastique*, I, mm. 274–92, Liszt arrangement, is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 274–279) features a piano (piano) arrangement with markings for 'Fg.', 'pp', 'poco calando', and 'perdendosi'. The second system (mm. 280–286) includes markings for 'cresc.', 'molto', 'les notes supérieures très accentuées', 'sf', and 'un poco marcato'. The third system (mm. 287–292) includes markings for 'p', 'più cre - - - scen - - do', 'sempre', 'affrettando', 'sf', 'f con passione', and 'f'. The score is written for piano and includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Liszt accentuates the bassoons and oboe by instrumental cues in measures 275 and 278, making them a skeleton of the bass and soprano lines, respectively. For the bassoon line

<sup>62</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 64.

from m. 278, Liszt adds a *tenuto* marking and writes *un poco marcato* to obtain a particular type of keyboard touch. At the same time the pianist is required to perform the entire passage *poco calando* (gradually decreasing in tempo) and *perdendosi* (dying away). As the oboe's role in the top line gives way to the violin from m. 283, the additional marking *les notes supérieures très accentuées* accentuates the thematic line more clearly and distinguishes it from the previous oboe line. As the extended *crescendo* builds up intensity in accordance with Berlioz's intent, the passage reaches another marking, *affrettando* (rushed accelerando), in m. 289, finally reaching the *forte tutti* enhanced with another marking of Liszt's, *con passione*. Liszt's carefully written indications throughout Example 1.2, therefore, not only demonstrate his meticulousness in notation but also heighten the nuances and dynamics of individual instruments or their combined sounds, simultaneously offering a variety of keyboard articulations and performance styles that reinvigorate the original in its new medium.

### *Layout of Orchestral Textures*

Liszt exploits additional staves for various purposes in his orchestral arrangements. First, it is obvious that he frequently uses them for his *ossias*, as common in his piano compositions. As normal, the *ossias* generally provide alternatives to a passage, often a difficult one. On occasion, however, the *ossias* reveal two contrasting sides of reworking the passage, both faithful and liberal, simultaneously (see the discussion of examples from Liszt–Beethoven *partitions* in Chapter 2, Example 2.4, and Liszt–Rossini *partitions* in Chapter 4, Example 4.3).

Liszt deploys the additional staves for another purpose in his arrangement of the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1865). The Finale would have certainly challenged Liszt to transfer both the voices and orchestra to the keyboard.<sup>63</sup> Liszt had previously arranged Beethoven's Ninth for two pianos (1851) by transferring the orchestral parts and voices to the first and second piano, respectively. When he undertook the two-piano arrangement, Liszt already acknowledged the challenges generated by the combination of the vocal and instrumental parts, as expressed in his letter to Breitkopf & Härtel in 1864:

In my edition of the Ninth Symphony for two pianos, prepared for Schott, the possibility was offered to me of reducing the most essential part of the orchestra-polyphony to ten fingers, and of handing over the chorus part to the second piano. But to screw both parts, the instrumental and vocal, into two hands cannot be done either *à peu pres* or *à beaucoup près*!<sup>64</sup>

In his solo-piano arrangement of the Finale, Liszt uses the two upper additional staves to write out the four-part chorus of the original throughout the movement, resolving the problem of integrating the voices and the full orchestra simultaneously.<sup>65</sup>

Although the additional staves for the *ossias* are frequent and familiar, and those for transferring the vocal part from the Finale of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony have the practical purpose of separating them from the instrumental parts in an orchestral arrangement, in a few instances Liszt's additional staves have unique and independent roles. As illustrated in Example 1.3, the additional staves can hardly be called an *ossia*,

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<sup>63</sup> Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 16, has noted this challenge.

<sup>64</sup> La Mara, *Letters*, II, 94; cited in Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 16–17.

<sup>65</sup> It also should be noted that although two additional staves in small notes are assigned to the chorus throughout the Finale arrangement, Liszt also uses the three-staved notation when the vocal recitative first enters in the Presto section of the Finale, placing it in the middle staff. Whereas the two additional staves are not meant to be performed, the recitative in three-staved notation is so intended. The three-staved notation will be discussed below.

because they do not provide a substitute for what is written above, but instead they have their own material.

Example 1.3. Beethoven, Symphony No. 1, II, mm. 54–64, Liszt arrangement

The image displays a musical score for Franz Liszt's arrangement of the second movement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 1, measures 54 through 64. The score is written for piano and woodwinds. The piano part is marked 'marcato' and features a complex, rhythmic melody in the right hand, while the left hand provides a steady, pulsating accompaniment. The woodwind part, specifically for Flutes (Fl.), Oboes (Ob.), Clarinets (Cl.), Bassoons (Fg.), and Cor Anglais (Cor.), is marked 'sempre staccato e leggero' and consists of short, staccato notes that complement the piano's melody. The score is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 54 to 57, and the second system covers measures 58 to 64. The key signature is B-flat major, and the time signature is 3/4. The piano part includes a 'p' (piano) dynamic marking in measure 60, and the woodwind part includes a 'p' dynamic marking in measure 59.

The consensus is that Liszt's use of additional staves reveals what he eliminated in his transferal: in the separate staves, he includes what he considered essential to the original but could not incorporate into the piano score properly, admonishing the performer to be aware of its omission in performance.<sup>66</sup> In this regard, the additional

<sup>66</sup> Cory, "Franz Liszt's Symphonies de Beethoven," 29.

staves in Example 1.3 may indicate what he could not or did not transfer into his piano score, yet its purpose goes beyond that.

In the piano score, Liszt first focuses on the main thematic lines by transferring the triplets of violin I and flute to the right hand, while the left hand renders the salient feature of the timpani's salient dotted rhythm. Liszt's own expressive markings *marcato* and *sempre staccato e leggiero* for the timpani and violin I, respectively, heighten the two distinctive layers of sounds and articulations: moreover, the *staccato* triplets become more articulated with the aid of specific fingerings. Along with these two independent layers of sound, Liszt incorporates the accompaniment parts of the remaining instruments as harmonic support. He preserves the sustained pitch G from the trombone, carefully selects other notes from the original accompaniment, and delineates all of them so they do not intrude on the important melodic and rhythmic lines. Liszt's layout thus captures the simultaneity of the disparate orchestral textures and sounds clearly and convincingly, each with its unique articulation and character. The light triplets in the top and the characteristic dotted rhythms in the bass serve as a skeleton, while the selected accompaniment parts in the middle register lend another independent layer of sound.

The additional staves also show Liszt's insightful layout of the orchestral texture. These staves immediately convey that some of the accompaniment parts have been eliminated in his version. But they do not simply indicate what is present in the original and omitted in the piano version. Liszt would have not necessarily been obliged to offer the separately spaced staves to inform us of what had been removed. When he believes it necessary to include the additional staves, however, the written-out parts help the pianist or reader to imagine the overall sonority of the original. Furthermore, Liszt did not

provide such additional staves frequently—only in a few instances, notably in the *partitions* of Beethoven’s symphonies.<sup>67</sup> Although the reason for his particular use of the additional staves is not easy to pinpoint, it should be related to his resolve to become a conscientious translator of his predecessor’s music, as expressed in his preface to the set of Beethoven *partitions*. Moreover, by using the device as a means of communication between composer-arranger and performer, Liszt attempts to invite the performer to adopt his assiduous attitude towards the original.

Liszt’s experimentation with staves is also evident in his use of three-staved notation. Whereas his additional staves mentioned above, which are written in small notes, suggest that they are not always intended to be performed, the three-staved notation conveys a different meaning. As illustrated in Example 1.4a, all of the material in the three independent staves is meant to be performed in full.

Example 1.4a. Beethoven, Symphony No. 9, I, mm. 531–33, Liszt arrangement

<sup>67</sup> Examples in the set of Beethoven’s symphonies are found in No. 1, II, mm. 54–64 (its repetition from m.153); III, 48–52 (its repetition from 66); IV, the passage from 133; No. 2, IV, 252–56; No. 3, I, 226–68, 308–16, the passage from 320 on; IV, mm. 422–32; No. 8, I, the passages from 55 and 250; IV, the passage from m. 120; No. 9, I, the passage from 120, 147–48, 387–98, 469–76; IV, 31–36.

Example 1.4b. Beethoven, Symphony No. 9, I, mm. 531–33

The musical score for Example 1.4b, Beethoven's Symphony No. 9, I, measures 531–33, is presented for a full orchestra. The score is in the key of B-flat major (one flat) and 3/4 time. The dynamic marking is *ff* (fortissimo). The woodwind and brass sections play a dotted rhythm, while the string sections play a more angular, rhythmic pattern. The score is divided into three measures, with measure numbers 531, 532, and 533 indicated at the beginning of each measure.

The instruments and their parts are as follows:

- Fl. 1
- Fl. 2
- Ob. 1
- Ob. 2
- Cl. 1 (B $\flat$ )
- Cl. 2 (B $\flat$ )
- Bsn. 1
- Bsn. 2
- Hn. I, II
- Hn. III, IV
- Cl. (D)
- Timp.
- Vln. I
- Vln. II
- Vla.
- Vc.
- D.B.

In the original score as shown in Example 1.4b, there are essentially three different types of texture: the dotted rhythm in the woodwind and brass, the angular

accompaniment of bassoons and string tremolos, and the timpani's rolls. They are all reiterated consistently and relentlessly to maintain an enormous *tutti* sound, ultimately reaching the memorable initial statement of the theme in *ff* unison (from m. 539, not shown in Example 1.4b). In Liszt's rendering of Example 1.4a, the top and the bottom staves realize precisely the two textures of the dotted rhythm and the angular accompaniment. At the same time the middle stave conveys the timpani rolls on D, which are carefully incorporated into the spaced texture. Moreover, he adds the F# at the octave to the middle stave. The reasoning behind this is that the winds include a lower octave of F#, which cannot be sounded on beat 1 of the measure, and thus he sounds it in the middle of the measure. The three-stave rendering makes the sustained notes in the upper voice clearer. His use of the middle stave thus compensates for the effect of the timpani rolls and the sustained sound. Liszt deploys the three-staved notation to heighten not only the spacious aura of the *tutti* sound but also to convey all of the instrumental effects visually and acoustically as much as possible.

In many of Liszt's piano compositions, the three-stave notation is inextricably bound to the renowned "three-hand" texture of piano virtuosity.<sup>68</sup> It was customary for Liszt's contemporaries such as Sigismund Thalberg, who often emphasized the notes of the main thematic line with accent marks above each one; this device helps the performer and reader not to confuse the melodic notes for accompaniment. Robert Schumann

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<sup>68</sup> Examples in Isabelle B  lance-Zank, "The *Three-hand* Texture: Origins and Use," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 38 (July-December, 1995): 99–121.



described Thalberg’s technique of “his grasping single notes among [the] masses, so that we sometimes imagine we hear different voices.”<sup>69</sup>

In his orchestral arrangements, Liszt preserves and revitalizes this conventional device as one of his effective solutions to capture the integrity of the original. The three-stave layout helps him spread the score out in order to clarify the intricate orchestral texture, which would not have been possible through accent marks on melodic notes or separately stemmed lines alone. As illustrated in Example 1.5, Liszt provides the notation for the performer to acknowledge the three distinct layers of orchestral texture, instruments, and timbres more clearly in both visual and acoustic dimensions. The winds in the top play a series of sustained notes and the bass *pizzicatos* hammer out the bottom, while the strings in the middle stave maintain the salient rhythm embedded in the Scherzo movement of the symphony.<sup>70</sup>

Example 1.5. Beethoven, Symphony No. 9, II, mm. 291–302, Liszt arrangement

<sup>69</sup> Schumann, *Music and Musicians*, ed. and trans. Fanny Raymond Ritter (London: William Reeves, 1880), 391; cited in Bélance-Zank, “The Three-hand Texture,” 103.

<sup>70</sup> Liszt carefully deploys the three-staved notation in a few selected instances from his Beethoven *partitions*, mostly in his later set. Examples include the passages from the earlier *partitions* of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 1, III, mm. 79–96, the beginning of Trio; No. 3, II, mm. 154–62 (Chapter 2, Example 2.1); and from the later *partitions* of No. 4, I, the passage from m. 252 and its repetitions; No. 8, I, mm. 191–96; No. 9, I, from m. 531; II, from m. 291; and III, from m. 99, 124–130, 151–54.

To conclude, an investigation of Liszt's notation has demonstrated how fully he acknowledged the limitations of the keyboard in rendering the orchestral score; how effectively he made his notational devices compensate for those limitations; and ultimately, how successfully his meticulous notation helps to reinforce the integrity of the original orchestral score, while simultaneously providing his own interpretation of the model. Liszt regarded the meticulous instrumental cues as an essential element in reinforcing his assiduous approach to the original down to the smallest detail; he used the cues to inform the performer of the essence of the original; and most of all, he attempted to demand that the pianist render the individual instrumental sounds and effects. The "performer's wit" that Liszt stressed serves as a significant element not only in his specific instrumental cues but also in his other scrupulous notational devices. Based on what we have assessed from Liszt's meticulous notation in the excerpts from the Beethoven and Berlioz *partitions*, the next two chapters, Chapters 2 and 3, delve into these groups, *partitions* of "sacred texts," as representations of a faithful rendering.

## Chapter 2

### ***Partitions of “Sacred Texts” 1: Beethoven’s Symphonies***

Liszt’s arrangements of the nine symphonies by Beethoven represent a monumental lifelong project. It covered almost three decades, essentially focusing on the two periods delineated by his early arrangements in 1837–1841 and later arrangements in 1863–1865. Liszt arranged the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Symphonies of Beethoven in 1837–38 as well as the “Marcia Funebre” movement from the Third in 1841.<sup>1</sup> Then, after almost two decades, Liszt embarked on arranging the remaining symphonies in 1863 and finally published the arrangements along with revisions of those done earlier under the title *Symphonies de Beethoven: partitions de piano* in 1865. Nevertheless, the long span between the two sets was interrupted by an occasion when Liszt completed his arrangement of the Ninth not for solo piano but for two pianos in 1851, thus continuing his Beethoven project.

The impulse behind Liszt’s massive reworking of Beethoven’s symphonies stems from his lifelong reverence for Beethoven. Liszt’s engagement with Beethoven’s musical legacy is common knowledge. His early encounter with his predecessor and its impact on his artistic life is often related to Beethoven’s bestowal of the “kiss of consecration” (*Weihekuss*), although this incident is now considered suspect, a misreading of a

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<sup>1</sup> Imre Mezó and the editors of *NLA*, Book 18, xi–xii, proposed a chronology of the four arrangements based on Liszt’s correspondence: Liszt’s Sixth was probably the first, then the Fifth in 1837, the Seventh in 1838, and finally the funeral march in 1841.

statement by Liszt's disciples and biographers and still causing debate among scholars.<sup>2</sup> During his virtuoso years, Liszt's programs featured Beethoven's piano compositions prominently and consistently, particularly in his Viennese concerts in 1838–39, where he was hailed as a genuine interpreter of Beethoven by Viennese critics.<sup>3</sup> Liszt deeply engaged with the festivities surrounding the erection of the Beethoven monument at Bonn in 1845. His multifaceted roles as financial donor, composer, conductor, and virtuoso pianist showed him not only as a boundless, tenacious figure appropriate for “self-monumentalization,” as Alexander Rehding argues, but also as an advocate of Beethoven's timeless music, as Ryan Minor claims.<sup>4</sup> In the memorial festival, a number of reviewers praised Liszt's faithful interpretation of Beethoven's music; among them,

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<sup>2</sup> Liszt's biographer Lina Ramann describes the young virtuoso's concert where Beethoven attended and “abruptly leaped up on the platform and kissed him [Liszt].” See Lina Ramann, *Franz Liszt als Künstler und Mensch* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1880–1894), I, 47. See also Allan Keiler, “Liszt and Beethoven: The Creation of a Personal Myth,” *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music* 12 (1988): 116–31; “Liszt Research and Walker's Liszt,” *Musical Quarterly* 70 (1984): 374–403; and “Ludwig Rellstab's Biographical Sketch of Liszt,” in *Franz Liszt and His World*, ed. Dana Gooley and Christopher H. Gibbs (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 344. For the debate on the incident, see the exchange between Alan Walker and Allan Keiler in *Musical Quarterly* 70, no. 3 (1983): 380–96 and 71, no. 2 (1985): 211–19. For the most detailed and substantial information surrounding the incident, including the *Weihekuss* incident in analogy with Mozart's encounter with Beethoven (1787), skepticism about the incident among Beethoven scholars, and the alternatively reconstructed story based on Beethoven's conversation book entries, see Kristina Muxfeldt, “A Curious Measure of Changing Beethoven Reception,” in *Vanishing Sensibilities: Schubert, Beethoven, Schumann* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 158, n. 20.

<sup>3</sup> For Liszt's programs, see the Table in Geraldine Keeling's study of Liszt's public performances of his keyboard works, 1829–39: “Concert Announcement, Programs and Reviews as Evidence for First or Early Performances by Liszt of His Keyboard Works to 1847,” *Studia musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 34 (1992): 400–1; see also Keeling, “Liszt's Appearances in Parisian Concerts, Part I: 1824–1833,” *Liszt Society Journal* 11 (1986): 22–34; “Part II: 1834–1844,” *Liszt Society Journal*, 12 (1987): 8–21. For discussions of Viennese critics' praise for Liszt's Beethoven interpretation, see Axel Schröter, “Der Name Beethoven,” I, 142–46; Christopher H. Gibbs, “‘Just Two Words. Enormous Success’: Liszt's 1838 Vienna Concerts,” in *Franz Liszt and his World*, 207.

<sup>4</sup> For a discussion of Beethoven memorial festival of 1845, see Alexander Rehding, “Musical Apotheoses,” in *Music and Monumentality* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 47–72, at 70–71; Ryan Minor, “Prophet and Populace in Liszt's ‘Beethoven’ Cantatas,” in *Franz Liszt and His World*, 113–66, at 118.

Berlioz remarked that Liszt's performance was delivered in a "grandiose, fine, poetic and yet always faithful manner."<sup>5</sup>

Liszt as a genuine and faithful adherent of Beethoven's music can already be observed in his preface to his *partitions* of Beethoven's symphonies (see Chapter 1). The driving force of the project was his wholehearted endeavor to become a "conscientious translator," who could make Beethoven's compositions fully comprehensible. The combination of Liszt's fidelity to Beethoven's music and his allegiance to his famous predecessor resonates with several accounts of his playing of portions of his Beethoven *partitions* as well as contemporary reviews of the *partitions* themselves. As we will observe, the contemporary critics and audience praised Liszt's faithfulness, but at the same time the faithfulness was perceived to be precisely the property that made his *partitions* "difficult" and thus accessible to only a small group of capable pianists and an educated audience. The contemporary assessment thus sets the stage for understanding Liszt's renderings of Beethoven symphonies as faithful to the original yet challenging enough to be intended for virtuoso pianists and thus unapproachable by other pianists.

The present chapter focuses on essential and detailed aspects of Liszt's transferral and reworking process. The musical examples investigate Liszt's pianistic solutions to orchestral complexity in order to demonstrate his aspirations to capture the details of Beethoven's orchestral compositions and at the same time his claim that his solo piano arrangements were equivalent to his predecessor's orchestral score through the full

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<sup>5</sup> For Berlioz's entire passage, see José Antonio Bowen, "'Even His Critics Must Concede': Press Accounts of Liszt at the Bonn Beethoven Festival," in *Franz Liszt and his World*, 470, nn. 15 and 21: [Hector Berlioz], "Fêtes musicales de Bonn," *Journal des débats* (22 August 1845 and 3 September 1845), reprinted in his *Les Soirées dans l'orchestra* (Paris, 1852); English translation as *Evenings in the Orchestra*, ed. & trans. C. R. Fortescue (Baltimore: Penguin Books, [1963]), 333–34; cited here from a new translation by Kevin Bazzana in *Beethoven Newsletter* 6, no. 1 (spring 1991): 6.

resources available on the piano. In this regard, musical analyses will demonstrate, first, how Liszt solves the problems of transferring the full orchestra to the solo piano, capturing the integrity of the orchestral score through the forces of the piano; second, how these attempts of his to render the original score as faithfully as possible on the piano, often evaluated as mere literal rendering, reveal his understanding of Beethoven's deployment of the distinctive characteristics of individual orchestral instruments; and third, how Liszt's reworkings in the transferring process show the limitations of the piano yet at the same time his virtuosity in solving the dilemmas of orchestral arrangement.

One of the distinctive elements of Liszt's undertaking of Beethoven *partitions* is that it took almost thirty years for Liszt to return to his project and complete the set after beginning it. The two separate stages of his project and their substantial break bring up the question of whether the two groups of arrangements exhibit consistency or some distinction in the reworking process. Walden Hughes argues the consistency of Liszt's fidelity with regard to his techniques, based on a comparison of Liszt's arrangement of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* with that of Beethoven Ninth's Symphony as a case study to represent his early and later arranging style, respectively.<sup>6</sup> The more comprehensive investigation undertaken in this study revisits the issue of whether there is some correspondence or distinction between his early and late arrangements by taking into account his relationship with publishers, his later *partitions* in relation to his compositional style in his later arrangements, and most of all, some of the distinctive figurations that appear in his later *partitions* more frequently than in his earlier ones.

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<sup>6</sup> Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions."

Liszt's Beethoven *partitions* have received a substantial amount of attention from scholars, as discussed in the Introduction.<sup>7</sup> A number of writings have provided useful examples of Liszt's transferral technique, yet one of the problems raised by them is interpreting and organizing Liszt's renderings in the two categories "literal" and "non-literal," thus positing a polarity between the two sides of reworking from the outset.<sup>8</sup> Investigation of the musical examples in this chapter expands upon and diverges from the previous studies. The expansion stems from a more comprehensive and detailed look at his transferral and reworking in accordance with his *partition* project. It does not focus merely on what Liszt is doing—whether he adds notes, or omits some parts of the orchestra score to adjust them to his piano score—but proposes to find the impulse behind his reworking. The musical analyses ultimately help move away from the existing dichotomy of fidelity and creativity to shed light on the two as interdependent.

### Contemporary Assessment

Liszt's playing of the last three movements of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony has loomed large in virtually every account of him performing his Beethoven *partitions*, as, for example, Charles Hallé observed: "he was fond at that time of playing in public his arrangement for piano of the 'Scherzo,' 'The Storm,' and the finale from Beethoven's 'Pastoral' Symphony."<sup>9</sup> In Paris, the audience heard Liszt rendering, more frequently

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<sup>7</sup> Cory, "Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*"; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions"; Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte'"; Schröter, "*Der Name Beethoven*"; Kregor, "Monuments and Mythologies," in his *Liszt as Transcriber*, 112–48.

<sup>8</sup> Cory, "Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*"; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions."

<sup>9</sup> Charles Hallé, *The Autobiography of Charles Hallé, with Correspondence and Diaries*, ed. Michael Kennedy (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1973), 58. For Liszt's playing of the last three movements from his Sixth Symphony, see the concerts in Vienna, 19 November 1839, Keeling, "Concert

than portions of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, portions of his Beethoven *partitions*.<sup>10</sup>

One critic in Paris (1839) was amazed at Liszt's playing, which captured the image of the orchestra:

Just listen to Liszt, orchestra on the piano! See in each of his fingers the capacity of a whole association of people! . . . He successively conjures up in their magnificence all the faces, the grandiose monologues of the winds, the demonic pizzicatos of the basses; from the trembling pianissimo to the fortissimo tempest! And you will admit that Liszt has transformed the piano, that he has metamorphosed it into an orchestra.<sup>11</sup>

The critic emphasizes not just Liszt's performance power to evoke the whole orchestral sound but his assiduous approach to dynamics and the instruments of the original orchestral composition. Liszt carefully calculated a wide spectrum of dynamic "from the trembling pianissimo to the fortissimo tempest." He also successfully rendered the varied effects and characters of Beethoven's individual instruments ("the grandiose monologues of the winds" and "the demonic pizzicatos of the basses"). Moreover, Liszt captured a variety of sounds and timbres simultaneously by moving his fingers

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Announcement," 401; Schröter, "Der Name Beethoven," I, 146; *Franz Liszt: unbekannte Presse und Briefe aus Wien, 1822–1866*, ed. Dezső Legány (Vienna/Graz, 1984), 60; in Bonn, 12 August 1840 and Hamburg, October 1840, Michale Saffle, *Liszt in Germany: A Study in Sources, Documents, and the History of Reception* (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1994), 104–5, 106, respectively; at the Salle du Conservatoire benefit concert, 23 June 1844, Keeling, "Liszt's Appearances," Part II, 21. For Liszt's playing of the last two movements, the Scherzo and Finale, from the Sixth, see the concerts at Salon Erard, 13 April 1841, Keeling, "Liszt's Appearances," Part II, 19; in London at the Hanover Square Rooms, 1840, Adrian Williams, *Portrait of Liszt* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 132; in Leipzig, 1840, Dana Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 158. For Liszt's playing of other movements from his Beethoven *partitions*, see the "Marche funèbre" from Beethoven's "Eroica" Symphony in Hamburg, October 1840, Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 188; and Clara Wieck's playing of Liszt's arrangement of the C minor Symphony, cited in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 139.

<sup>10</sup> Around Beethoven's death in 1827, the Parisian audience had already become familiar with Beethoven's symphonies. From the early 1800s on, Beethoven's symphonies had been performed there; but from 1828 when the Conservatoire Concert Society was founded and began to perform Beethoven's music, they appeared much more often in public and astonished Parisians. See *Music in Paris in the 1830s*, ed. Peter Bloom (New York: Pendragon, 1987), 568; *French Music from the Enlightenment to Romanticism 1789–1830*, trans. Sylvain Frémaux, ed. Reinhard G. Pauly (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1996), 319; Berlioz, *Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, trans. and ed. David Cairns (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 104.

<sup>11</sup> *Revue et gazette musicale* 6, no. 67 (12 December 1839), 531; trans. Gooley in his *Virtuoso Liszt*, 36.



independently (“See in each of his fingers the capacity of a whole association of people!”). This rendering is what inspired Dana Gooley’s concept of Liszt’s “orchestrality” in both performance and composition, in which the composer tends to deploy disparate layers of sounds, timbres, registers, and dynamics simultaneously.<sup>12</sup> The critic highlights Liszt’s ability to transform the piano into the orchestra, as is common in numerous anecdotes about Liszt’s playing; but more importantly, he essentially grasped Liszt’s scrupulousness in rendering Beethoven’s orchestral sound and texture.

The combination of Liszt’s orchestral concept and his faithfulness was further seen in the reception of his Viennese concert of 1839. Heinrich Adami, a Viennese music critic, left a substantial number of valuable reviews of Liszt’s concerts particularly centered on the virtuoso’s extensive concert series in the city in 1838, 1839–40, and 1846.<sup>13</sup> In his general assessment of these concerts, Adami draws his attention to Liszt’s ability to convey orchestral sound on the keyboard: “many passages from his compositions suggest that one of his primary goals is to orchestrate the piano as much as possible.”<sup>14</sup> In the concert of 19 November 1839, which included Liszt’s arrangement of the last three movements of Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony,<sup>15</sup> Adami praises particularly the properties of “fidelity” and “diligence” in Liszt’s rendering.

The reworking of this magnificent and complex composition for the pianoforte was as daring an undertaking as it was difficult if the aim was not merely to produce a brilliant concert piece, but rather to reproduce such a work with artistic

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<sup>12</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 36.

<sup>13</sup> Many of Adami’s reviews are published in *Franz Liszt: Unbekannte Presse*, ed. Legány.

<sup>14</sup> Legány, ed., *Presse und Briefe*, 40; *Allgemeine Theaterzeitung*, 5 May 1838.

<sup>15</sup> Keeling, “Concert Announcement,” 401, proposes that this Viennese concert is probably the first known public performance. Yet Hallé had already heard portions of the Liszt–Beethoven Pastoral symphony earlier in 1836, as we have already noted.

fidelity and diligence without arbitrary additions to or omissions of its spirit, true to its innermost being. And only an artist, like Liszt, who in addition to an infinite reverence for Beethoven also possesses the rare gift of understanding the great German master—only such an artist could and should venture such a dangerous undertaking. Whoever also is able even in part to grasp the artistic structure of a symphony by Beethoven and to know the manifold effects that are produced through the perpetual intertwining of all the instruments of a large orchestra will certainly know to appreciate the value of such a transcription. And if he in addition hears it performed as ingeniously, as it is done by Liszt, he will not claim that there was any constraint on the line of thought and the combination of the composer's ideas or that some things were here and there changed according to the needs of the arranger.<sup>16</sup>

Adami finds Liszt's fidelity to the original laudable for several reasons. First, Liszt's arranging of a large-scale orchestral work itself amounts to a "daring," "difficult," and even "dangerous" task. In this context, Liszt's faithful rendering even further highlights his superiority in this challenging type of arrangement. Second, Liszt's fidelity stems from his "artistic" pursuit, as opposed to practicality and entertainment ("not merely to produce a brilliant concert piece but rather to reproduce such a work with artistic fidelity and diligence and without arbitrary additions to or omissions of its spirit, true to its innermost being"). Finally, the fidelity helps to illuminate Liszt's comprehensive understanding of Beethoven's music and ultimately his unceasing allegiance to his predecessor.

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<sup>16</sup> Legány, ed., *Presse und Briefe*, 60. "Die Übertragung dieser großartigen und complicierten Composition für das Pianoforte war eine eben so gewagte, als schwierige Aufgabe, wenn es damit nicht etwa bloß auf ein brillantes Concertstück, sondern vielmehr darauf abgesehen war, ein solches Werk ohne willkürliche Zusätze oder Hinweglassungen seinem Geiste und seiner innersten Wesenheit nach, mit künstlerischer Treue und Gewissenhaftigkeit wiederzugeben, und eben nur ein Künstler, wie Liszt, der nebst einer unbegrenzten Verehrung für Beethoven auch die seltene Gabe besitzt, den großen deutschen Meister zu verstehen, eben nur ein solcher Künstler konnte und durfte sich an ein so gefährliches Unternehmen wagen. Wer auch nur zum Theile den kunstvollen Bau einer Beethovenschen Symphonie zu übersehen im Stande ist, und die vielen und mannigfaltigen Effecte kennt, welche durch das immerwährende Ineinandergreifen aller Instrumente eines großen Orchesters hervorgebracht werden, der wird den Werth einer solchen Übertragung gewiß sehr zu würdigen wissen, und wenn er sie noch überdies so geistvoll vortragen hört, wie es durch Liszt geschieht, nicht behaupten, daß der Gedankenfolge und Ideenverbindung des Tondichters irgend ein Zwang angethan oder hie und da Manches nach dem Bedürfnisse des Bearbeiters umgemodelt worden sey."

G. W. Fink provided a significant assessment of Liszt's *partitions* of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in 1840.<sup>17</sup> Like Adami, Fink regards Liszt's faithful rendering and his reverence for Beethoven as complementary in his *partitions* of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies. He comments on the Sixth that "Liszt has undertaken and executed his work with deference to the great master of the composition."<sup>18</sup> On the Fifth, he writes:

We are convinced that this work has been created with reverence for the great deceased artist's composition, with painstaking care, and that it was undertaken with the intention of giving back faithfully everything possible for the pianoforte of the entire instrumental mass and all that the orchestral work so vividly is able to put before our senses—yet all rendered by one person<sup>19</sup>

Aside from Liszt's faithfulness, Fink's assessment offers a useful insight into some other details of the virtuoso's arrangement. One of the specific comments is about Liszt's meticulous approach to notation. In his report on the Sixth Symphony, Fink regards Liszt's detailed cues for instruments as an essential element of an orchestral arrangement (as discussed earlier in Chapter 1). In his comments on the Fifth, he points out Liszt's fingering:

In not just a few appropriate places, Liszt has marked the fingering, sometimes above, sometimes below and next to the spread of the hand, depending on the clearest way to read it in each place. These specifications by such a celebrated pianist must be by all means highly desirable, even for those players who not only mastered their fingerings according to efficient rules and patterns but also mastered them following their own reason and the unique, organic condition of

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<sup>17</sup> Fink, "Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt," 305–8.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 308. "Liszt mit Hochachtung gegen den grossen Meister des Werkes seine Arbeit unternommen und ausgeführt hat."

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 307. "Wir sind überzeugt, dass dieses Werk mit Ehrfurcht vor dem Gebilde des grossen Todten, mit gewissenhafter Sorgfalt und in der Absicht verfasst worden ist, alles dem Pianoforte nur Mögliche aus der Gesamtmasse der Instrumente getreu wiederzugeben, was das Orchesterwerk uns am Lebhaftesten, nur von einer Person dargestellt, vor die Sinne zu führen vermag." A different translation in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 136.

their hands and fingers, and are at peace with themselves, if only for the sake of comparison.<sup>20</sup>

Fink concludes his comments on Liszt's specific fingering as "beneficial for those admirers of the pianoforte who have mastered it by means of their own diligence."<sup>21</sup> Although Fink focuses on the notational devices from the perspective of competent pianists and their "diligence" to acquire them, Liszt's careful inscription of fingering throughout his *partitions* immediately conveys the nature of his *partition* project, in which he aspires to be a "conscientious translator" of his predecessor's music. (Liszt's fingering will be further explained in my discussion of Liszt's Weber arrangements that concludes the *partitions* in Chapter 5.)

It is significant that Fink's assessment helps place Liszt's arrangements in the realm of a few professional pianists and a cultivated audience. In his comments on the Fifth, Fink suggests that Liszt's rendering is suitable for competent pianists, who are distinguishable from others who prefer another type of arrangement "for the sake of an easier feasibility."<sup>22</sup> As is more pronounced in his assessment of the Sixth, Fink underscores the issue of the "technical difficulties" intrinsic in Liszt's *partition*. Such a challenge in turn creates a polarity between pianists who are drawn to it and those "who do not wish to deal with [it]":

All of the previously mentioned careful considerations are found again to the same degree in the transcription of the Pastoral symphony. However, it [the

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<sup>20</sup> Fink, "Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt," 307. "An nicht wenigen geeigneten Stellen hat Liszt die Applikatur angegeben, bald über, bald unter und neben den Griffen stehend, wie es des deutlichen Lesens wegen an jeder Stelle am passendsten ist. Diese Angaben eines solchen gefeierten Pianisten müssen nun jedenfalls auch solchen Spielern, die ihre Fingersetzung nach tüchtigen Regeln und Mustern nicht nur, sondern zugleich nach eigenem Verstande und besonderer organischen Hand- und Fingerbeschaffenheit erlernten und mit sich selbst hierin im Reinen sind, wäre es auch nur um des Vergleichens willen, höchst erwünscht sein."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 307.

Pastoral Symphony] is made more dexterous and more difficult than the previous symphony. Now, most certainly, there are many among our pianists for whom exactly this difficulty in the execution is something very attractive, but there are also others who do not wish to deal with the technical difficulties.<sup>23</sup>

Fink continues to stress the “difficulties” inherent in Liszt’s *partition* by relating the issue to the reception of the general audience:

Our insignificant opinion would therefore go as follows: this arrangement may initially be used for overcoming significant difficulties with an exceedingly dexterous and new mode of playing. And once this has been overcome, the work may be performed for connoisseurs or in small groups, instead of a mixed audience who cannot compensate for the lack of tone colors and who cannot appreciate the difficulties.<sup>24</sup>

Fink makes it clear that Liszt’s *partition* pertain to an elite audience (“connoisseurs” rather than “a mixed audience”); only for this particular group are the exceptional “difficulties” generated from the performance of the *partition* appreciative and accessible. In contrast, as Fink believes, the “mixed audience” would find it difficult to understand the challenging style of performance and to comprehend Liszt’s pianistic renderings of the orchestral colors fully. For the latter, Fink implies that the mixed public was generally less exposed to hearing the original symphony than an exclusive group of the audience was, and thus the public is less likely to be capable of comparing the original with its corresponding piano version.

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<sup>23</sup> Fink, “Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt,” 308. “Alle die letztgenannten sorgfältigen Berücksichtigungen finden sich in demselben Grade in der Bearbeitung der Pastoralsinfonie wieder. Allein sie ist noch viel vollgriffiger und schwieriger gesetzt, als die vorige Sinfonie. Gibt es nun auch ganz gewiss Viele unter unsern Pianisten, denen gerade diese Schwierigkeit in der Ausführung etwas sehr Anziehendes ist, so wird es doch auch wohl Andere geben, denen so viele Besiegungen technischer Bravouren nicht erwünscht sein können.”

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 308. “Unsere unmaassgebliche Meinung würde deshalb dahin gehen: Man verwende diese Bearbeitung zunächst für Ueberwindung bedeutender Schwierigkeiten eines überaus vollgriffigen Spieles neuer Art, und hat man sie besiegt, trage man das Werk mehr vor Kennern oder in kleinen Kreisen, als vor einem gemischten Publikum vor, das den garnicht zu ersetzenden Mangel der Tonfarben sich nicht hinzudenken, noch die Schwierigkeiten zu schätzen vermag.” A different translation in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 136–37.

Fink does not explicitly point out that the “difficulties” in Liszt’s playing stem from faithfulness in his rendering. However, the meticulousness in piano arrangement and technical challenges in performance are not mutually exclusive: the more precisely the original orchestral score is rendered, the more intricate the corresponding piano score becomes as a corollary, and the more demanding the rendition. Although Fink pays attention primarily to Liszt’s new mode of performance style, he essentially captures the nature of Liszt’s *partition* as exceptionally detailed and demanding, ultimately making the *partition* difficult and hard to appreciate by the “mixed audience.” The properties of “fidelity” and “diligence”—which Adami used for his enthusiastic responses to the same concert—become one of the driving forces that make Liszt’s Beethoven *partitions* challenging to understand and thus excluded from the larger public.

Expanding Fink’s comments on “difficulties,” Jonathan Kregor provides compelling arguments about the “inaccessibility” of Liszt’s Beethoven *partitions* in three other respects.<sup>25</sup> First, the unprecedented extent of Liszt’s faithfulness to Beethoven’s music in minute detail makes his *partition* awe-inspiring. Liszt’s deliberate rendering of this aura of Beethoven allows only a selected few listeners to partake in his Beethoven project, ultimately creating distance between his *partitions* and the general public.<sup>26</sup> Second, publishers had been initially disinclined toward Liszt’s *partitions* because of their exceptional virtuosity and exclusivity; in a word, they were impractical.<sup>27</sup> Finally, Liszt’s renderings were challenging for even the celebrated virtuoso pianists of his time; Clara Wieck describes his arrangement of the Fifth Symphony as “incomparably

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<sup>25</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 137–39.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

beautiful and masterfully” but “incredibly difficult,” eventually expressing her doubt whether she would ever perform it.<sup>28</sup>

Although Kregor’s argument that Liszt’s Beethoven *partitions* appealed to an exclusive audience is plausible and insightful, we can determine who Liszt’s audience was only by conjecture. Gooley has furnished thorough and thought-provoking investigations of how the construction of Liszt’s public identity is contingent upon different audience perceptions of his playing, and how Liszt as a “strategist” managed his connections to different locales and cultural dispositions throughout his concert travels, centered mainly on the four locations of Pest, Vienna, Weimar, and Paris.<sup>29</sup> Gooley’s study is useful for offering insight into the relationship between Liszt’s Beethoven *partitions* and his audience. A comparison among different performances of these *partitions* sheds light on the broader context for understanding the correlation between Liszt’s audience and his public persona, as Gooley’s study has stressed. This comparison also helps reinforce the idea of exclusivity and inaccessibility associated with Liszt’s Beethoven *partitions*.

The reception in Paris and Vienna, as discussed above, was enthusiastic overall with regard to Liszt’s accomplishments in three respects: his ability to conjure up the image of the orchestra on the keyboard; his detailed approach to individual instruments and dynamics; and his scrupulous rendering of the original that elevates his arrangement to the level of his predecessor’s legacy. At the same time critics such as Fink pointed out that the “mixed public” would experience “difficulties” in appreciating Liszt’s technical

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<sup>28</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 139.

<sup>29</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, passim.

and compositional challenges, ultimately placing his *partitions* in the realm of inaccessibility. Fink's assessment does not disclose a negative attitude toward Liszt's rendering, but rather conveys the sense of exclusivity prevalent in Liszt's concerts. The "air of exclusivity," in Gooley's terms, is precisely what Liszt attempted to convey in the majority of his concerts in Paris, Vienna, and Prague.<sup>30</sup> Gooley argues that Liszt's success in those locations stemmed primarily from his stepping into them with "elite-oriented concert" strategies; among these strategies, he charged high ticket prices that attracted a high social profile, placed restrictions on complimentary tickets, and made hierarchical seating arrangements.<sup>31</sup>

The exclusivity Liszt imparted to his concerts in Paris and Vienna, however, came to appear utterly inappropriate for Leipzig. One of the main reasons stems from a different audience profile and concert customs in the city; the Leipzig audience was far more conservative and lacked substantial nobility in comparison with his previous audiences, and the high ticket prices did not suit Leipzig concert customs.<sup>32</sup> Liszt's concert of 1840 in Leipzig provoked cold, negative reactions from critics and audiences in the first place.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, his performance of the arrangement of the Scherzo and Finale of Beethoven's Sixth Symphony, the first piece of the concert, elicited weak applause and subsequently led Schumann to write that "The impression of this piece on

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<sup>30</sup> The phrase "air of exclusivity" comes from Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 159. Liszt does not always interact exclusively with audience of a high social profile, of course, since he partakes in many of benefit concerts intended for the "middle bourgeois"; but Gooley, op. cit., 70, argues that Liszt's social networks and activities were "consistently and deliberately elite."

<sup>31</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 158–59.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 157–59. For the high price tickets, see also Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 96.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 159.



the public was also not favorable.”<sup>34</sup> Fink also points out the unsatisfactory reception in relation to the idea of difficulty, as discussed above; it was “Liszt’s mistake that he introduced the last two movements of this symphonic arrangement in his first musical soirée in Leipzig. The applause, which was in reality not passionate, could not have been any greater, because the effect was not as big as the difficulty.”<sup>35</sup>

Behind the cold reception in Liszt’s Leipzig concert of 1841 lies an intricate web of disparate elements.<sup>36</sup> What is important for the current discussion in relation to the audience profile is that the “exclusivity” and “prestige” of the Parisian and Viennese audience, in which Liszt was deeply involved, contrasted with the “uniformly bourgeois” Leipzig audience.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, it should be noted that when it came to an elite group of the Leipzig audience, their view of Liszt’s Beethoven *partition* was not unfavorable. Felix Mendelssohn, who attended the same concert of 1840, praised the “precision” and “power” in Liszt’s *partition*, as evident in his letter to his mother on 30 March that year.<sup>38</sup>

Liszt’s deliberate attempts to ally himself with serious-minded people are also evident in his concert “strategy” for Beethoven’s music. From 1837 on, his concerts made the bold move of programming nearly unknown large-scale compositions by

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<sup>34</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 42/13, 25 March 1840, cols. 261–66; quoted in Gooley, *Virtuoso Liszt*, 159. For Liszt’s playing of his Beethoven arrangement and the unfavorable reception by the Leipzig critics and audience in the first concert given in the city, also see Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 96–97.

<sup>35</sup> Fink, “Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt,” 308.

<sup>36</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 159, gives several reasons, including Liszt’s miscalculation of concert strategies, particularly the high ticket price; the contrast between his previous identity as a “French Romantic” and “cosmopolitan virtuoso” and his new claim to be a “candidate for German national culture”; and Liszt’s “style” of projecting the image of Beethoven that was “heavily filtered through” his “cosmopolitan virtuoso identity and through his French Romanticism,” which in turn was unfamiliar to the more classical-minded Leipzig public.

<sup>37</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 158.

<sup>38</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 129. Mendelssohn reports that “The first item was the finale of the Pastoral Symphony, arranged for piano solo.” In the London concerts during the same year of 1840 as in Liszt’s Leipzig concert, however, the audience was enthused with his playing of the Scherzo and Finale of the Pastoral Symphony given at the Hanover Square Rooms. Williams, *Portrait*, 132–34.

Beethoven, including the *Hammerklavier* Sonata, Op. 106. Liszt had been the first pianist to ever give a public performance of that work, in 1836.<sup>39</sup> Besides that, Liszt's playing of the *Hammerklavier* is considered unusual for three primary reasons. First, the piano sonata genre still pertained to connoisseurs and a cultured audience in intimate, private concerts, whereas dilettantes and the mixed public were more inclined to brief showpieces such as opera fantasies.<sup>40</sup> Liszt had included the sonata genre consistently, situating his concerts in the forefront of a new direction from previous piano concerts.<sup>41</sup> Second, in the context of Liszt's relationship with Beethoven, his extensive performances of Beethoven's piano sonatas helped bolster his life-long and unwavering reverence for his predecessor and his music.<sup>42</sup> Beethoven's piano sonatas occupied a prominent position in Liszt's piano solo programs; based on Saffle's study, Liszt's solo recitals during his years 1840–45 in Germany often included a Beethoven sonata or sonata movement as an opening piece, and the second half of the concert generally repeated the same.<sup>43</sup>

Finally, Liszt's playing of the *Hammerklavier* lends a particular meaning to his Parisian concerts around 1836–37. Before 1836, the only Beethoven piece Liszt had ever

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<sup>39</sup> Hamilton, "Early and Weimar Piano Works," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, 65.

<sup>40</sup> William Newman, *The Sonata since Beethoven* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1969), 52; "Liszt's Interpreting of Beethoven's Piano Sonatas," *Musical Quarterly* 58 (1972): 192. In fact, the majority of Beethoven's piano sonatas were intrinsically an elite taste associated with musical connoisseurs in London and Vienna, according to Timothy Jones in his book *Beethoven: The "Moonlight" and Other Sonatas, Op. 27 and Op. 31* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), particularly the discussion of "Music for Connoisseurs" at 6–10.

<sup>41</sup> Although Liszt's consistent inclusion of the genre contributes to his position as a pioneering pianist of programming, Clara Schumann and Hans von Bülow were also prominent virtuosos who helped popularize the performance of sonatas in public concerts. See Newman, *Sonata*, 52.

<sup>42</sup> Ten sonatas are recorded in Liszt performances: Op. 26; Op. 27, No. 2 [Moonlight]; Op. 31, No. 2 [Tempest]; Op. 57 [Appassionata]; Op. 90; Op. 101; Op. 106 [Hammerklavier]; Op. 109; Op. 110; and Op. 111. Peter Raabs, *Franz Liszt*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Tutzing: Hans Schneider, 1968), I, 271.

<sup>43</sup> Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 198–99.

performed in public was the “Moonlight” Sonata.<sup>44</sup> After his first *Hammerklavier* performance in 1836, his subsequent concert series from 1837 on frequently include the imposing sonata and other large-scale compositions by Beethoven.<sup>45</sup> Gooley provides a compelling argument regarding Liszt’s programming by relating it to the legendary Liszt–Thalberg duel of 1837 and his Parisian audience.<sup>46</sup> Although the majority of the Parisian public had lionized Thalberg, Liszt attempted to challenge the Parisian virtuoso by offering two unplanned concerts that included the *Hammerklavier* for an exclusive audience in 1836.<sup>47</sup> The impulse behind his “strategy” toward Beethoven’s *Hammerklavier*, according to Gooley, lies in that “it was a genre of separation from Thalberg and his dilettante public, which was least likely (he [Liszt] thought) to be interested in the Beethoven. He was asserting himself as a serious *artiste* in order to make Thalberg look like a charlatan.”<sup>48</sup>

It is no coincidence that Liszt’s project of Beethoven’s *Hammerklavier* and his programming in a new direction from his concerts of 1837 onwards all occurred around the same time as he began to undertake his first *partitions* of Beethoven’s symphonies (1837–41) and to include them as a staple of public concert repertoire. As he deliberately attempted to engage with an exclusive audience through his playing of Beethoven’s sonatas, the same line of reasoning can be extrapolated to his performances of his Beethoven *partitions*.

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<sup>44</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 53.

<sup>45</sup> His four chamber music séances of 1837 featured Beethoven’s piano trios; see Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 53. For the repertoire of chamber music, see Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 188.

<sup>46</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 53.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. The two concerts were given at the Erard Salon in May 1836.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

The connection between Liszt's playing of the *Hammerklavier* and of his Beethoven *partitions* is not just the "air of exclusivity" but extends to Liszt's interpretative goal of faithfulness. Liszt's playing of the *Hammerklavier* in 1836 has long been considered to claim his status as a "faithful" adherent of Beethoven's music. According to the famous remark of Berlioz on the event, Liszt's interpretation of the *Hammerklavier* stands at the pinnacle of textual fidelity:

This is the great modern school of piano-playing. . . . In support of my opinion I appeal to the judgment of all those who have heard him play the great Beethoven sonata [Op. 106], that sublime poem which until now has been the riddle of the Sphinx for almost every pianist. Liszt, a new Oedipus, has solved it in a manner which would have made the composer, had he heard it in his grave, thrill with pride and joy. Not a note was omitted, not one added (I followed, score in hand), not a single alteration made to what was indicated in the text, not an inflexion or an idea weakened or changed from its true meaning. In the Adagio above all . . . he remained constantly at the level of the composer's inspiration. No higher praise can be given, I know, but since it is true I cannot say less. . . . By such a rendition of a work totally misunderstood until now, Liszt has proved that he is the pianist of the future.<sup>49</sup>

Berlioz's report once again contributed to Liszt's accomplishment in the history of the piano recital. The virtuoso's playing of the *Hammerklavier* reorients the concept of the sonata from one previously thought impossible and incomprehensible to one that is immediately comprehensible. Moreover, Berlioz's comment on Liszt's fidelity ("Not a note was omitted, not one added, not a single alteration made to what was indicated in the text") represents what may have been required in performance of Beethoven's sonatas and by extension, his music. Carl Czerny, Liszt's teacher, shared the same interpretative goal of the predecessor's music, as he noted in the early 1840s:

In the performance of [Beethoven's] works (and generally for all classical composers) the performer should throughout allow no alteration of the

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<sup>49</sup> Berlioz, writing in *Revue et gazette musicale* (12 June 1836); Williams, *Portrait*, 77–78.

composition, no addition and no abbreviation. . . . For one wants to hear the artwork in its original form, as the Master thought and wrote it.<sup>50</sup>

Liszt's fidelity to Beethoven certainly follows what his contemporaries would have sought out to fashion themselves as the master's heir, yet at the same time his personal attitude toward Beethoven should be not underestimated. Around the same time of his *Hammerklavier* playing and his undertaking of the Beethoven *partitions*, Liszt resolved to change his interpretive goal toward faithfulness. As evident in the letter cited below, he himself admitted by 1837 that he had frequently made additions and changes in the music of Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel in order to fulfill the demands of the shallow public; yet now he determined to be faithful to the music, in keeping with "the most profound respect for the masterpieces of great composers."

During that time [1829–37], both at public concerts and in private salons (where people never failed to observe that I had selected my pieces very badly), I often performed the works of Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel, and let me confess to my shame that in order to wring bravos from the public that is always slow, in its awesome simplicity, to comprehend beautiful things, I had no qualms about changing the tempos of the pieces or the composer's intentions. In my arrogance I even went so far as to add a host of rapid runs and cadenzas, which, by securing ignorant applause for me, sent me off in the wrong direction—one that I fortunately knew enough to abandon quickly. You cannot believe, dear friend, how much I deplore those concessions to bad taste, those sacrilegious violations of the SPIRIT and the LETTER, because the most profound respect for the masterpieces of great composers has, for me, replaced the need that a young man barely out of childhood once felt for novelty and individuality.

Now I no longer divorce a composition from the era in which it was written, and any claim to embellish or modernize the works of earlier periods seems just as absurd for a musician to make as it would be for an architect, for example, to place a Corinthian capital on the columns of an Egyptian temple.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Carl Czerny, *Kunst des Vortrags* (Wien: Diabelli, 1847), 34; cited in Mary Hunter, "'To Play as if from the Soul of the Composer': The Idea of the Performer in Early Romantic Aesthetics," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58 (2005): 357–98, at 357–58.

<sup>51</sup> Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, 17–18; cited in Hamilton, "Early and Weimar Piano Works," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, 173.

To conclude, the contemporary assessment and performance accounts of Liszt's Beethoven *partitions* discussed above elucidate that his unremitting allegiance to Beethoven and his fidelity to his predecessor's music combined to shape the interpretative goal for his Beethoven *partitions*. Contemporary critics suggested Liszt's faithfulness as a significant property of his becoming a genuine interpreter of the great deceased master, and the same property was regarded as a high value in his performances of other compositions by Beethoven around the same time, including the imposing *Hammerklavier*. At the same time, Liszt's faithful rendering is precisely what the critics related to the realm of a difficult and demanding composition, ultimately making it inaccessible to the general audience and therefore excluding it. The difficulty in comprehending Liszt's rendering, in fact, stems from his scrupulous rendering originating in his notion of *partition*, because the meticulousness in transferral is inseparable from the technical challenges. The details of what the critics observed in Liszt's playing are also valuable for understanding several of the transferral techniques associated with his *partition* project: his ability to conjure the image of the orchestra on his keyboard; his meticulous approach to individual instruments, dynamics, and fingering; and his successful layout of intricate orchestral textures. These observations help to pave the way to further investigation of Liszt's rendering in detail through the musical examples below: how his solutions are successful and convincing in capturing the distinctive orchestral sonorities in the piano medium, how his use of pianistic resources represents his dual expertise as virtuoso pianist and virtuoso composer, and finally how his reworkings reveal his attempts to elevate his solo piano arrangements to the level of his predecessor's orchestral compositions.

## **Liszt's Rendering of the Full Orchestra to the Solo Piano: His Solutions**

The orchestral score would have posed challenges and difficulties to Liszt. This section discusses how Liszt solved the problems of interpreting the full orchestra in the medium of solo piano and whether his solutions were successful. Previous studies have focused on what Liszt did: what he eliminated, altered, added, or simplified. The examples below, however, demonstrate what Liszt focused on to capture the integrity of the original: orchestral cues, effects, and complex textures. His careful attention to orchestral complexity and diversity led him to seek out different solutions for different contexts in a convincing manner.

### *Piano on equal status with the orchestra*

As observed in the performance accounts above, Liszt aspired to conjure up the image of the orchestra on the keyboard. Examples 2.1a and 2.1b (mm. 160–62) illustrate how he attempts to make the piano create an unheard-of sound-equivalent of orchestral sound by full pianistic resources and technique.

Example 2.1a. Beethoven, No. 3, II, mm. 154–62

Flute

Oboe

Cl. (B♭)

Bsn.

Horn I/II

Horn III

Tpt. (C)

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Viola

Cello D.B.

*ff* *sf*

Example 2.1b. Beethoven, No. 3, II, mm. 154–62, Liszt arrangement

154

*p* *sotto voce* *p* *ff*

159

Flati *ten.* *ff*

*m.d.* *ff*

Archi *marcatissimo*

*ten.* *ten.* *ten.* *ten.*



The three-layered orchestral texture is clearly delineated in Liszt's three staves, executed effectively by his renowned "three-hand effect." His octave-doubling and thickened chords add textural density, suggesting on the piano the full orchestral sonority of the low register and *fortissimo* dynamic. The *tenuto* marking accentuates the thematic chords, but the marking is impossible to render in performance. The *tenuto* is thus a paradoxical yet conceptual way to convey the effect of the chord.<sup>52</sup> It is also noteworthy that Liszt did not render Beethoven's constant, insistent tremolos literally, but instead carefully selected and laid them out alternating with rests, coordinating with the thematic material. This reworking reflects Liszt's attempt not simply to reproduce a loud orchestral effect but to preserve the clarity of the distinctive orchestral textures against the massive sound, making his rendering more convincing according to the original composer's intention (his focus on the clarification of orchestral textures will be discussed further in the next section).

Moreover, Liszt's rendering of the massive sound above intensifies a striking contrast to the previous passage. In Beethoven's score, as in the entire passage of Example 2.1a, the *piano* thematic fragment occurs in a single violin line, then followed by single thick *fortissimo* chords, and finally the full statement of the theme in loud dynamic and thick texture. Liszt draws on Beethoven's quintessential trait of abrupt contrast in texture and dynamics and makes it more dramatic and effective: in Example 2.1b, his incorporation of *sotto voce* in the *piano* part (m. 154) further heightens a sharp contrast and juxtaposition with his trademark three-hand effect in the *fortissimo* part.

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<sup>52</sup> Beethoven indeed did not provide a full chord of the thematic material, creating an unusual voicing. Liszt was clearly aware of the details of the original voicing and meticulously laid the chords out.

*Liszt's solutions for orchestral complexities: clarification of thematic lines*

On many occasions, Liszt focuses on which instruments carry the main theme(s), clarifying complex orchestral textures and carefully interweaving textures on the piano score. His reworkings thus frequently involve pitch omissions and alterations, register alterations, and rhythmic alterations.

As in Examples 2.2a and 2.2b below, Beethoven's score indicates that a new theme in the oboe forms a counterpoint with the main theme in the violin 2 and cello. Liszt first provided detailed cues of instruments and slur markings to make the thematic line clear.

Example 2.2a. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 288–93

288

Fl. a 2. p sf p

Ob. sf p

Bsn. sf p

Vln. I sf p

Vln. II sf p

Vla. sf p

Vc. pizz.

Example 2.2b. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 288–93, Liszt arrangement

288

Ob. Fl. p

Vc. p

Bassi pizz.

In Liszt's version, he uses the designation "Fl" (flute), even though he did not include the notes of the flute, the repeated B. Instead, he retains the same repeated pitch in the violin, yet without precisely transferring the instrument's movement an octave up then down. One may point out that the two instruments double the same pitch and thus perhaps Liszt selected only one instrument.

The rhythmic difference between the flute and violin I, however, provides further insight into his reworking. In Beethoven's score, the rhythmic conformity between the flute and the main themes is contrasted with an off-beat difference between the violin I and the main themes. In the transferral process, Liszt chooses not the flute's rhythm but that of the violin, which is syncopated. The violin's syncopated pitch B requires a particular hand technique in m. 288, placing the left hand over (or below) the right at the keyboard and constantly alternating with the main theme. This reworking thus illustrates Liszt's concern about visual effects through the layered-hand position.<sup>53</sup> The violin also keeps sustaining tension through the same note as backdrop. For the violin pitch, Liszt carefully incorporates it into this texture by registral alteration, lowering the notes an octave in mm. 290–91 and then going back to the original in m. 292, essentially maintaining the same pitch and thus not distracting from the theme.

In sum, Examples 2.2a and 2.2b demonstrate how Liszt successfully illuminates the dominant thematic lines interwoven in the orchestral texture, carefully eliminating notes and selecting the appropriate rhythm and register. Most of all, his pianistic

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<sup>53</sup> Liszt's strategic concern about the visual and acoustic sensations in the listener will be further discussed in the Conclusion.

considerations, reflected in this condensed register and texture, make his reworking convincing.

*Focus on the main character of the original*

On several occasions, Liszt emphasizes the main character, concept, and musical idea of Beethoven's individual movement, not hesitating to radically simplify the original. His simplified version is often discussed in the context of performance, for it enables the pianist to gain speed in order to accommodate the accelerated effect of the orchestra.<sup>54</sup>

His substantial eliminations occur in his reworking of the first movement of Beethoven's Seventh, as in Examples 2.3a and 2.3b. This reworking adds another layer of meaning to his simplification.

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<sup>54</sup> Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,'" 301; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 105.

Example 2.3a. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 84–90

84

Flute I  
II

Oboe I  
II

Cl. I  
(A) II

Bsn. I  
II

Hn. I  
(A) II

Tpt. I  
(D) II

Timp.

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello  
D. B.

Example 2.3b. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 84–90, Liszt arrangement

84

88

*ben marcato*

In Beethoven's movement (Example 2.3a), rhythm is the most vital idea: the persistent dotted rhythm associated with the gigue throughout.<sup>55</sup> In the exposition of his Seventh (Example 2.3b, mm. 84–87), Liszt's focus on the rhythmic energy led him to eliminate the emphatic chords with *sforzando* marks in the upper winds and horns. Liszt could have rendered the strokes in one hand, along with the characteristic dotted rhythms in the other hand. But instead, he concentrates on the rhythm; its energy and vitality are transferred into the ascending direction in both hands. Furthermore, Liszt's emphasis on rhythm is more evident in the following passage (mm. 89–108: only mm. 89–90 are shown in Example 2.3b above). The sixteenth-note figuration in Violin II and Viola completely disappears, maintaining the dotted rhythm and again focusing on the salient feature of rhythm. The notes of the rapidly pulsating sixteenth-note figuration instead are transformed into harmonic fillers of the thickened chords in both hands. Liszt's rendering, therefore, preserves the idea of "filler" yet revitalizes Beethoven's rhythmic fillers into his own harmonic filler.

The characteristic dotted rhythm has a climactic moment in the development, which consists almost exclusively of the persistent rhythm, as in Examples 2.4a and 2.4b below.

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<sup>55</sup> The rhythmic character associated with dance in Beethoven's Seventh has been acknowledged, particularly by both Berlioz and Wagner, suggesting a suite of dances: Intrada with March and Gigue; March with two Trios; fast and slow contredanses in triple meter; and a Contredanse "Angloise" in duple meter. A. Peter Brown, "The Symphonies of Ludwig van Beethoven," in *The Symphonic Repertoire*, vol. 2, *The First Golden Age of the Viennese Symphony: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Schubert* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 505.

Example 2.4a. Beethoven, No. 7, I, m. 255–62

255

Flute I  
II

Oboe I  
II

Cl. I  
(A) II

Bsn. I  
II

Hn. I  
(A) II

Tpt. I  
(D) II

Timpani

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello  
D.B.

Example 2.4b. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 255–62, Liszt arrangement

255

8va

8va

8va

8va

assai loco

Rea

Rea

259

8va

ff

Rea

Rea

Liszt does not simply transfer the passage literally, as suggested in the *ossia*, but reworks it in an extraordinary way through his registral alterations, as shown in his marking of *8va* across mm. 257–58 and 260–62. In other words, he avoids the unidiomatic writing of merely hammering full chords, as in the *ossia* passage of mm. 256–57; instead, for the entire passage above, he exploits the keyboard register, expanding and contracting it back and forth in order to keep the interest in the constant rhythm and thus sustain the massive effect of the *tutti*. Liszt’s registral exploitation creates a powerfully visual sensation in the experience of the listener; the passage in mm. 260–62, in particular, is dazzling through its exploration of three octaves in rapid succession.

Moreover, Liszt’s reworking in mm. 256–57 creates a new, rising melody of E–A–E–A, which was not in the Beethoven score. This expanded range makes the passage more exciting. His reworking (unlike the *ossia*) also occurs in the melodic content, emphasizing the strings over the winds in the first beat of each measure. This reworking also reflects his attempts to simultaneously capture the two different groups of instruments and their sonorities by juxtaposing them in his pianistic rendering. His rendering thus creates a remarkable acoustic interplay between the two groups of performing forces, eventually eliciting a unique acoustic sensation in the experience of both performer and listeners.

Charles Rosen makes a compelling argument that Liszt’s compositional process is reliant largely on “different ways of playing the same theme,” which ultimately changes



the “performance style.”<sup>56</sup> Further interpreting Rosen’s argument, Susan Bernstein claims that such a compositional process “shifts the emphasis of composition from formal features to means of producing sound.”<sup>57</sup> The same situation can be applied to Liszt’s reworkings in Example 2.4b, in which he offers his novel approach to the performance manner of the original theme, reinvigorating the model in his own version. Moreover, when we consider Liszt’s commitment to adhering closely to the model of Beethoven, as observed in his preface to the set of his Beethoven arrangements, the registral exploitation would have provided a compelling reworking method for Liszt to preserve the “formal features” of the original yet at the same time suggest a different way of “producing sound” on his keyboard through his unique performance style. The familiarity and freshness are present as two sides of the same coin in Liszt’s rendering.

In conclusion, Examples 2.3 and 2.4 above illustrate how Liszt effectively heightens the vitality of Beethoven’s movement, radically strips off orchestral textures to capture the essence of the original, and convincingly maximizes the massive orchestral effect at the climax by his individual pianistic resources (such as exploitation of registers). Example 2.4b, in particular, reveals how he astonishingly gives new life to the original theme through his own performance style while he preserves his “faithful” approach to the original structure. His reworkings contribute to claiming the instrument’s position as equivalent to the orchestra and simultaneously creating his own visual and acoustic sensations for his own purpose.

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<sup>56</sup> Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 48.

<sup>57</sup> Susan Bernstein, *Virtuosity of the Nineteenth Century: Performing Music and Language in Heine, Liszt, and Baudelaire* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 111.

Example 2.5 provides another instance of Liszt's focus on a characteristic melody—now a delicate violin tune contrasting with the energetic, massive, and dramatic motive in Examples 2.3 and 2.4 above. He carefully selects minimal orchestral parts in order to highlight the tune and effectively delineates the reduced orchestral parts in his three-stave piano score.

Example 2.5a. Beethoven, No. 9, III, mm. 99–101

**Lo stesso tempo.**

Fl. *p dolce*

Ob. *p dolce*

Cl. *p dolce*

Bsn. *p dolce*

**Lo stesso tempo.**

Hn. B $\flat$  *p*

Hn. E $\flat$  *p*

Tpt. *p*

**Lo stesso tempo.**

Vln. I *p dolce* arco

Vln. II *p dolce* pizz.

Vla. *p dolce* pizz.

Vc. *p dolce* pizz.

Example 2.5b. Beethoven, No. 9, III, mm. 99–101, Liszt arrangement

Lo stesso tempo

Die begleitenden Stimmen der linken Hand immer gleichmässig *pp* und staccato

The third movement of Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony, marked *Adagio molto e cantabile*, consists of two alternating themes in variations with fanfare interruptions, outlined A B A1 B A2 A3 *Fanfare* A4 *Fanfare* A4 *Coda*.<sup>58</sup> Example 2.5a is the moment of A3 where violin I unfolds its *cantabile* melody in an extended 12/8 meter spanning 23 measures, while the other parts continue accompanying the tune with their serene sonorities. In his version, Liszt extracts the string parts as well as the Eb horn’s repeated concert F’s from the original orchestral texture, placing them on the bottom two staves, which in turn emphasizes the violin’s *cantabile* melody on the top staff with a light accompaniment in the lower two parts.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup> This movement has a serene and pastoral character in contrast with the majestic and ponderous character of the surrounding movements. The structural outline is based on Brown’s analysis of a “varied part form”: A (m. 3), B (m. 25), A1 (m. 43), B (m. 65), A2 (m. 83) A3 (m. 99) *Fanfare* (m. 121), A4 (m. 125), *Fanfare* (m. 131), A4 (m. 137), *Coda* (m. 151). See Brown, “Symphonies of Ludwig van Beethoven,” 539, 534–44.

<sup>59</sup> Liszt does not entirely exclude the wind and brass parts of the orchestral textures, because some notes of the upper parts, specifically the Eb horn’s repeated Ds (F at concert pitch), are incorporated into the accompanying parts in his piano version.

Aside from adding the extra staff, Liszt's emphasis on the violin melody is further illuminated by his designation inscribed in the score (see Example 2.5b): "NB. Die begleitenden Stimmen der linken Hand immer gleichmässig *pp* und staccato" (Nota bene. The accompanying voices of the left hand always steadily *pp* and staccato). Liszt thus reinvigorates Beethoven's full orchestral texture into a chamber-ensemble texture, highlighting the essence of the original, the memorable *cantabile* violin melody.

Liszt's three-stave notation also reinforces Beethoven's contrast in texture, rhythm, and character, a salient feature of the movement. Toward the end of Beethoven's movement, the serene, extended, lyrical violin melody is juxtaposed and contrasted with the loud, emphatic, fanfare interruptions, as in the outline of A3 Fanfare A4 Fanfare above. Liszt's reworking of the A4 section (Example 2.5b above) and the Fanfare *tutti* (Example 2.5c below) illustrates how he intensifies the contrast intrinsic to the original.

Example 2.5c. Beethoven, No. 9, III, mm. 121–22, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 2.5c shows measures 121-22 of Beethoven's No. 9, III, in Liszt's arrangement. The score is written for piano (p), violin (VI.), and horn (Cor.). The piano part is in a three-stave layout, with the left hand playing a steady, staccato accompaniment. The violin part plays a melodic line, and the horn part plays a fanfare. The score includes dynamic markings such as *sf* (sforzando) and *ff* (fortissimo), and articulation markings such as *ten.* (tenuto) and *>* (accent).

His reworking presents three types of contrast simultaneously through (1) transferring only the string parts and the E-flat horn (Example 2.5b) and then the *tutti* (Example 2.5c), (2) alternating the three-stave layout for the strings and the two-stave layout for the *tutti*,

and (3) differentiating the *cantabile* texture for the strings from the bare, chordal passages for the Fanfare *tutti*.

### **Liszt's Rendering of Distinctive Orchestral Effects**

#### *Sustained sonority*

The orchestral score often requires distinctive sustained notes at a constant dynamic level. On the piano, however, such resonating ability is limited, creating a problem for maintaining the sonority. Liszt attempts to render sustained orchestral sonorities on the piano in various ways: (1) by simply omitting the sustained notes, mostly when they are secondary in importance; (2) by compensating for the confines of the piano by using tremolo figurations, often enhanced by the use of the damper pedal (this device is found throughout his set of Beethoven symphonies as well as his other *partitions*); and (3) by other devices, including repeated notes and an additional stave.<sup>60</sup>

Examples 2.6a and 2.6b, however, raise the question of Liszt's usual practices associated with the sustained notes mentioned above.

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<sup>60</sup> Liszt's rendering of the sustained notes has been discussed: Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," 26–27; Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 195–96.

Example 2.6a. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 109–21

109

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Hn. B $\flat$

Tr.

Tp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*f* + Doule bass

115

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn.

Hn. B $\flat$

Tr.

Tp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Example 2.6b. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 109–21, Liszt arrangement

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system, measures 109–113, is marked 'Tutti' and 'f'. It features a piano part with sustained notes and a right hand with a melodic line. The second system, measures 114–117, is marked 'ten.' and 'sf'. The third system, measures 118–121, is marked 'stacc.' and 'sf'. The score includes various dynamics such as *f*, *sf*, *ff*, and *stacc.*. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Liszt clearly states the thematic line in the first phrase (mm. 109–12), but in the second statement (mm. 113–16) he gives more weight to the sustained notes in the strings. The melody in the clarinet (which is reinforced in the original by the flute and bassoon I an octave above and below, respectively) is present in the right hand, and sometimes as an inner voice, but is outweighed by the repeated F's in the upper and lower octaves.

Throughout his orchestral arrangements the sustained notes are often sacrificed at the expense of clarifying main thematic lines. The opposite, however, is present in Example 2.6b in mm. 113–16, as if the sustained notes are suppressing the thematic line. Liszt focuses on the effect of Beethoven's symphony in performance when the sustained strings are combined with the theme. Liszt, as a deep musical thinker, conveys the

didactic purpose of his rendering, as if saying that he wants to teach us the great Beethoven in a correct way.

Despite the aural prominence of the strings' sustained notes in the second statement, the simultaneity of the two markings, the *sf* and *tenuto*—the latter is Liszt's own—reflects Liszt's attention to the sarabande-like rhythm that defines the thematic character and also articulates the sustained notes. Because of the emphasis on the rhythm one can surely still hear the theme in the midst of the relentlessly repeating F's. Liszt's rendering, first of all, intensifies Beethoven's contrasts between the first thematic statement and the second, further developed by different types of instruments, rhythms, and articulations in accompaniment: between violins and woodwinds, between straightforward rhythm and sarabande-like, and between *staccato* accompanimental patterns and tremolos.

Liszt's reworking, as shown in Example 2.6b, demonstrates that he also refuses to repeat the same phrase. The avoidance of repetition is in fact one of the common techniques throughout the repertoire under study, as will be revisited and summarized in the Conclusion. More importantly, his reworking provides a different way of varying the theme from Beethoven's use. As mentioned earlier, Beethoven's variation of the theme first presents the strings in straightforward rhythmic motion (mm. 109–12) and then the winds in a sarabande-like rhythm (mm. 113–16). Liszt must have acknowledged the limitation of transferring the timbral change between the two statements in his piano score. Had he rendered the two statements in a faithful manner, they would have lent an impression of repeating themselves simply without timbral distinction on the keyboard. Liszt's manipulation of the second statement is partly his solution to the limitation.



### *Orchestral tremolos*

The tremolo is an essential type of idiomatic writing for strings and is often deployed in orchestral writing. The string tremolos generate a distinctive orchestral color, frequently creating a sense of excitement, building the intensity particularly of massive passages, and also maintaining tension in *pianissimo* passages. If the many instances of tremolos were transferred to the keyboard, it would be more destructive than effective, creating a monotonous sound on the piano without producing the actual effect of string tremolos. In his set of Beethoven's Symphonies, however, Liszt's solutions for capturing the tremolos show how he attempts to explore other possible resources of the piano. His solutions range from simple reduction to replacing the tremolos with octaves, chords, and arpeggios, sometimes excluding them entirely for other purposes.<sup>61</sup>

Liszt's solutions for string tremolos invite more attention, mainly because of their frequency, diversity, and effectiveness throughout his set of Beethoven's Symphonies. In the case of Examples 2.7a and 2.7b, tremolos occur in a *pianissimo* passage, sustaining the tension and building intensity toward the *fortissimo* passage that follows.

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<sup>61</sup> Different ways Liszt deals with the orchestral tremolos have been discussed. See Domokos, "Orchestrationen des Pianoforte," 314–17; Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," 48–51.

Example 2.7a. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 29–36

[illegible][illegible]

Example 2.7b. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 29–36, Liszt arrangement

The musical score is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 29–31) shows the upper register with a melodic line and the lower register with a tremolo. The second system (mm. 32–34) continues the texture, with the upper register featuring lyrics and the lower register maintaining the tremolo. The third system (mm. 35–36) shows the texture continuing, with the upper register having a melodic line and the lower register having a tremolo. Dynamics include *pp*, *ff*, and *sf*. Pedal marks are present in the lower register.

Preserving the original register, Liszt delineates the orchestral textures in three-layered texture, in which the theme in the middle register is surrounded by outer tremolos (mm. 29–33). He carefully alternates the tremolos between the upper parts and the lower parts, as in the original, distinguishing the lower tremolos by the damper pedal. Liszt's three-part texture clarifies the thematic statement, while sustaining the tension surrounding it.

It is worth noting that Liszt uses repeated sixteenth-note octaves to simulate string tremolos, instead of other possibilities he could have found: for example, the usual (staggered) octave tremolo. The repeated octaves become more convincing in relation to the following group of sixteenth-note octave scales in the climax. Had these two types of octave patterns been treated in previous studies, they would presumably have been

conceived of as literal and separate: literal reduction of the string tremolos and of a scale passage. They certainly reflect Liszt's faithfulness, yet they are not separate but connected by his careful solutions. He perhaps seeks out rhythmic conformity, by which the successive passages—the build-up of intensity and then the climax—are conceived as one musical unit by the constant rhythmic pattern. Thus what Liszt probably aimed for in tremolo figurations is not mere diversity, as the previous studies suggest, but a careful selection of the pianistic rendering of orchestral tremolos appropriate for the context.

On several occasions, Liszt's pianistic tremolos do not necessarily solve the problem of orchestral tremolos, but fulfill other demands. As shown in Examples 2.8a and 2.8b, Liszt incorporates tremolos every time the trill in the timpani appears.

Example 2.8a. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 264–73

The musical score for Example 2.8a, Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 264–73, is a full orchestral score. It includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hn.), Trumpet (Tr.), Timpani (Tp.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The music is in 3/4 time and features a constant rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with tremolos (sf) throughout. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The score is numbered 264 at the beginning.

Example. 2.8b. Beethoven, No. 3, I, mm. 264–73, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 2.8b, Liszt's arrangement of Beethoven's No. 3, I, mm. 264–73, is presented in two systems. The first system begins at measure 264 and the second at measure 269. The score is written for piano (p) and timpani (Timp.). The piano part consists of a treble and bass staff, while the timpani part is on a single staff. The piano part includes dynamic markings such as *sf*, *ff*, and *sf*. The timpani part includes dynamic markings such as *sf* and *ff*. The piano part also includes markings for "ten." (tension) and "Ossia" (alternative). The timpani part includes markings for "8va" (octave) and "ff" (fortissimo).

In Liszt's version, however, the pitches that comprise the tremolos embrace the sustained notes surrounding them rather than the notes of the timpani. Liszt's tremolos thus take double advantage of simulating the timpani trills and sustaining sonority on the piano.

Examples 2.9a and 2.9b below illustrate how Liszt focuses on the shape of the string tremolos and its cumulative effect.

Example 2.9a. Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 91–104

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 91–104, features a full orchestral texture. The woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet in B-flat, Bassoon) and strings (Violins I and II, Viola, Violoncello and Double Bass) are all active, with various dynamics and articulations. The brass section (Horn in F, Trumpet in F, Timpani) provides harmonic support. The second system, measures 98–104, shows a more simplified texture, with the woodwinds and strings playing a more unified role, and the brass section providing harmonic support. The score includes various dynamics such as *f* (forte), *sf* (sforzando), and *cresc.* (crescendo). The first system also includes a *a 2* marking, indicating a second ending or a specific performance instruction.

Example 2.9b. Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 91–104, Liszt arrangement

Liszt uses octaves with chords for string tremolos rather than his more usual patterns such as staggered octaves, virtuosic arpeggios, and hammering chords. His choice of seemingly simple octaves with chords is convincing, because it enables him to capture the shape of the string part more faithfully and clearly. Liszt apparently does not attempt to simulate the gesture of tremolos (note that he also completely excludes timpani rolls). Rather, by excluding the wind parts, he emphasizes the shape and effect of the string tremolos: the outlining pattern of the harmony, the descending and ascending motion, the contrary motion between the upper and lower strings (mm. 93–95), and the build-up toward the dominant stroke in m. 100.

In the extended passage on a C-major chord in mm. 96–99 of Example 2.9b, Liszt's reworking is more effective than the original, not only because of its cumulative effect with added notes but also because of its visual effect with two hands spreading from the middle of the keyboard. The spectacle is more highlighted when restating the same material in mm. 113–17, as in Example 2.9c below; here the *tutti*'s accumulative

texture and effect in *fortissimo* is contrasted with the thin, soloistic texture in *piano* that precedes and follows.

Example 2.9c. Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 112–18, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 2.9c is a piano arrangement of Beethoven's No. 8, I, mm. 112–18. It is written for piano (p) and features a flute (Fl.) part, a tutti section, and a violin (Vle.) part. The piano part is marked with 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'stacc.' (staccato). The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings. The tempo is marked 'Allegretto'.

In Example 2.9b, Liszt's creation of a visual sensation continues in the following passage in mm. 100–2. In Beethoven's score, the emphasis on the pitch C is extended by alternating the characteristic staggered octaves in the strings with the *tutti* strokes marked with *sforzandi*. Liszt's rendering maintains his focus on the strings, as he did in the previous passage, completely excluding the upper register of the winds but preserving the characteristic pattern of the strings. Yet Liszt highlights the characteristic octave pattern alternating in a two-octave range, requiring the hands to leap over the keyboard in order to convey the alternation. His rendering thus creates a more visually appealing execution and more acoustically emphasized *sforzandi* by falling farther. Example 2.9b thus exhibits Liszt's reworking as equivalent to or even exceeding Beethoven's orchestral tremolos and their effects by his careful selection of string parts, his emphasis on the salient shape and effect of the parts, and his own creation of a visual impact on the listener.



Examples 2.10a and 2.10b illustrate how Liszt makes distinctive, delicate trills alive against the backdrop of chordal tremolos.

Example 2.10a. Beethoven, No. 2, I, mm. 30–31

Fl. I  
II

Ob. I  
II

Cl. I  
(A) II

Bsn. I  
II

Hn. I  
(D) II

Tpt. I  
(D) II

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello  
D.B.

Example 2.10b. Beethoven, No. 2, I, mm. 30–31, Liszt arrangement

30

Fl.

Leo

In Beethoven's score, the alternation of the trills between the flute and violin is one of the most distinctive moments in this movement, while the winds provide delicate, chordal tremolos as background. Liszt could have taken the two distinctive trills in one hand, while the other hand is pulsing the chordal tremolos. Instead, he makes the individual trill toss back and forth between the two hands, creating a layered hand position which in turn distinguishes each trill visually. This reworking in an aural context may represent a literal transferral of the trills in dialogue, yet the ostensibly literal rendering involves a different choreography for the pianist to further illuminate the distinction between the two trills. Liszt clearly acknowledged the confinement of the piano arrangement, which lacks timbral differences. The trill on the A in the violin is an octave lower, making it sound like a different instrument as it does in the first measure of the example. By imbuing the passage with his own performing manner and placing the last trill an octave lower, he succeeds in approximating the dialogue between the two solo instruments.

In addition, Liszt's layout of the accompaniment helps heighten the sense of dialogue of the trills. The trill figure in the lower octave is accompanied each time by pulsations an octave lower than written in the orchestral version, representing the horn pulsation. Liszt preserves the static character of the accompaniment through the chordal tremolos, and at the same time his registral adjustments in the accompaniment make the memorable trills more distinctive and ultimately enhance the sense of dialogue. Liszt's faithful approach to the original thus stems not from his attempt to simply "reproduce" the model but from his aspiration to better approximate and "recreate" it.

## **Liszt as Virtuoso Performer and Virtuoso Composer: Pianistic Considerations in His Reworking**

Liszt had an extensive understanding of the virtuosic capabilities and confines of the piano in his reworking process. His pianistic considerations are derived from his attempts to create a better approximation of the orchestral sound on the piano and at the same time to prove his virtuoso pianistic prowess equivalent to the orchestral effect. The following examples reveal Liszt's capacity as both virtuoso performer and virtuoso composer.

### *Pianistic considerations: transformations of accompaniment patterns*

Liszt's extensive reworking often entails a transformation of accompaniment patterns in the orchestra score into aptly idiomatic or brilliantly virtuosic music for the piano. The result of his reworking is to fully explore the extended range of the instrument, achieving a resonant sonority to accommodate the original effect; to prove his artistry as virtuoso performer, arranger, and composer; and above all to dazzle the audience. In Examples 2.11a and 2.11b, Beethoven's string tremolos in mm. 119 and 121 could have been rendered by pianistic octave tremolos. Indeed, Beethoven's tremolos are insistently in octaves between violins 1 and 2, and thus pianistic octave tremolos fit into the original figuration. Instead, Liszt chose an arpeggiated pattern, exploring a more sonorous pianistic texture and thus intensifying a dramatic accompaniment appropriate for the original passage. His solution is indeed more compelling than the tremolos of the original.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> In m. 120, the omission of the important pitch A in the highest thematic line raises the question of whether Liszt actually excluded such a crucial note or whether it is an editorial error, since he includes the corresponding note F# in m. 122.

Example 2.11a. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 119–28

The musical score is presented in two systems. The first system, measures 119–122, shows the woodwinds (Fl., Ob., Cl. (A), Bsn.) and strings (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc. & D.B.) all marked with a crescendo, leading into a fortissimo (f) section. The brass instruments (Hn. (A), Trp. (D)) enter in measure 120. The second system, measures 123–126, continues the fortissimo section. The woodwinds and strings play complex rhythmic patterns, while the brass instruments provide harmonic support. The score includes various dynamics such as crescendo (cresc.), fortissimo (f), and sforzando (sf). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 2/4.

Example 2.11b. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 119–28, Liszt arrangement

The image displays a musical score for a piano arrangement. It is divided into two systems. The first system, starting at measure 119, includes a piano introduction marked 'cresc.' and a 'Rea.' marking. The second system, starting at measure 123, includes a piano introduction marked 'energico' and a 'Rea.' marking. The score features various musical notations, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

In Example 2.11b, Liszt’s reworking occurs not only in the accompaniment but also in the rhythm and register of the passage that follows (mm. 124–27). Liszt does not merely show allegiance to Beethoven’s rhythmic pattern, but instead reconceives the simple yet emphatic rhythm in pianistic terms. He alters the register in an extraordinary way, making the hands jump back and forth constantly and ultimately creating particular visual effects. Through the additional marking *energico*, his reworking emphasizes the single strokes of the strings on the beat, creating a natural accent on the main beats, and at the same time making a visual effect through execution. This forceful rhythmic pattern also lends a remarkable acoustic effect with an emphasis on a short–long pattern, as opposed to the long–short pattern in the original.

In the entire passage of Example 2.11b, Liszt’s newly added virtuosic figurations of arpeggios and scales are sharply contrasted with the contracted, impetuous rhythmic pattern that follows. Such a succession of contrasting textures and effects, as observed

earlier in Example 2.1, is inherent in Beethoven's music yet more effectively rendered by Liszt. The two contrasting textures and effects also show Liszt's compositional and performing virtuosity but in two contrasting aesthetics: his expertise at creating bravura passages and his ability to manage the piano's registers for a more succinct, emphatic purpose on the other hand. What is common in the two different types of reworking is to fully use the physical movement, thus creating a visual impact on the listener.

Examples 2.12a and 2.12b illustrate how Liszt's virtuosic figurations effectively capture Beethoven's extended build-up process.

Example 2.12a. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 142–52

142

Fl.

Bsn.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*pp*

*cresc.*

*pp*

*cresc. poco a poco*

*pp*

*cresc.*

*pp*

*cresc. poco a poco*

Example 2.12a. (Continued)

Example 2.12a shows a musical score for measures 147 through 152. The score is for a full orchestra, including Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horn (Hn.), Trumpet (Tr.), Trombone (Tp.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins at measure 147. The Flute, Oboe, and Bassoon parts have a *cresc.* marking. The Clarinet part has a *p cresc.* marking. The Horn, Trumpet, and Trombone parts have a *ff* marking. The Violin I and Violin II parts have a *ff* marking. The Viola and Violoncello parts have a *ff* marking. The score ends at measure 152.

Example 2.12b. Beethoven, No. 7, I, mm. 142–52, Liszt arrangement

Example 2.12b shows a musical score for measures 142 through 152, which is a Liszt arrangement of Beethoven's No. 7, I, mm. 142–52. The score is for a piano. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The score begins at measure 142. The piano part has a *pp* marking and a *legato* marking. The score ends at measure 152. The score includes a *cresc. poco a poco* marking.

In Beethoven's score, the repetitive thematic line grows intensely through string tremolos and dynamic levels over a ten-measure span. In Liszt's version, the arpeggiated pattern in the *pianissimo* passage in mm. 142–47 turns into bravura octave patterns in mm. 147–51, sweeping a range of two octaves. Had Liszt insisted on a note-for-note reproduction, it would have been hard to maintain the tension successfully. His reworking thus serves a double purpose: the effective build-up process of the original and the unparalleled virtuosity of his pianistic writing.

### **Correspondence and Discrepancies Between Liszt's Early and Late Arrangements**

It took about twenty-five years for Liszt to return to his project of arranging Beethoven symphonies: from his early arrangements of Beethoven's Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh, and the "Marcia Funebre" movement of the Third (1837–41) to his late arrangements of the remaining symphonies (1865). The two stages of his project with a substantial break in between raise the question of whether the groups of arrangements exhibit consistency or discrepancies in his reworking process.

One of the motivations for Liszt to complete arranging the remaining symphonies was his relationship with Breitkopf & Härtel. In 1863 the publisher returned to Liszt with a request for the entire set of arrangements: "in the first place we should like to express our desire to publish all symphonies arranged for piano two hands by you. . . . Would you be so kind as to let us know whether and under what conditions you are willing to comply with our request?"<sup>63</sup> In his response a short time later, Liszt was willing to agree to the

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<sup>63</sup> *NLE*, Book 18, xiv; Oskar von Hase, *Breitkopf & Härtel*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1968), 2/1, 172.



publisher's desire and subsequently obtained the latest editions of Beethoven's symphonies: "I acknowledge with the sincerest thanks the receipt of your latest edition of the orchestral scores and I will take great pains not to fall short in my piano scores in the particular care, accuracy, and perfection of the set-up of your edition."<sup>64</sup>

Liszt's response also indicates that he would endeavor to be scrupulous to the original in his later set, immediately recalling his notion of "*partition*" when he embarked on undertaking his arrangements of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and the early set of Beethoven's symphonies. As discussed earlier, he also refined his concept of "*partition*" and articulated it publicly in his preface to the *partitions* of the Fifth and Sixth symphonies; more important for the current discussion, the preface appears unaltered in his later set of Beethoven *partitions* (see Chapter 1). It is therefore not a coincidence that his resolution to become an "assiduous translator" of his predecessor's music exhibited in his earlier stage continues in his later stage. In both stages, Liszt deploys many common transferral techniques in an attempt to render the original as meticulously as possible, including detailed cues, clarification of orchestral textures, and maximizing orchestral effects through the full resources of the piano. The overall consistency of Liszt's faithfulness, therefore, is present in his rendering of the whole series of Beethoven's symphonies. At the same time, it is intriguing that some of Liszt's techniques appear more frequently and distinctively in his later set. Although these techniques occupy a minor portion of his rendering and therefore have little impact on the overall faithfulness, they do indicate one facet of his transferral and reworking techniques that distinguishes his later set from his earlier one.

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<sup>64</sup> *NLE*, Book 18, xi; Hase, *Breitkopf & Härtel*, 173.

Liszt's career shift—from a celebrated virtuoso pianist in the late 1830s and early 1840s to a conductor, director, composer, and teacher after 1848—frequently relates to his compositional change from highly brilliant compositions such as opera fantasies through revolutionary symphonic poems to his later works that are simple on the surface yet harmonically complex, introspective, and fragmented. This compositional shift also occurs in his evolution of arrangements from the earlier virtuosic and fantastical variations to later simplified versions such as his arrangement of the “Agnus Dei” from Verdi's *Requiem*.<sup>65</sup> Does this compositional change override Liszt's Beethoven Symphonies? Specifically, does Liszt tend to avoid virtuosic figurations in his later version, preferring a more straightforward setting?

In his earlier arrangements, brilliant pianistic passages are frequently found in Liszt's reworking of the orchestral tremolos: sweeping arpeggios, staggered octaves, or three-hand textures. Liszt frequently incorporates such bravura passages, as observed in his Seventh (Example 2.12b above), into the other two early arrangements of the Fifth and Sixth, as illustrated in Examples 2.13–2.15. In both Examples 2.13b and 2.14b, Liszt's newly added material in sonorous arpeggios (Example 2.13b) and more demanding arpeggios with chords (Example 2.14b) serve a similar double purpose. The new material explores the full sonority and sustains the build-up of intensity equivalent to the original orchestral effect and at the same time creates pianistic virtuosity.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Kregor, “Stylistic Reconstructions,” in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 186–219. Kregor also points out Liszt's shift in choice of composers from German to those of other regions such as Russian and contemporary Italian.

<sup>66</sup> In Example 2.13b, the complete deletion of the characteristic motive in the piccolo catches our attention. The omission of the motive would have allowed Liszt to better approximate building-up the massive orchestral sound of the *tutti*, because the inclusion of the motive would have distracted from

Example 2.13a. Beethoven, No. 5, IV, mm. 72–76

72

Picc.

Fl. I  
II

Ob. I  
II

Cl. I  
(C) II

Bsn. I  
II

C. Bsn.

Hn. I  
(C) II

Tpt. I  
(C) II

Tbn. I

Tbn. II

Tbn. III

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

D. B.

sustaining the intensity of the passage. Also, note that the string tremolos are rendered in triplet patterns, suggesting one facet of his varied approaches to orchestral tremolos.

Example 2.13b. Beethoven, No. 5, IV, mm. 72–76, Liszt arrangement

Example 2.13b shows a Liszt arrangement of Beethoven's No. 5, IV, mm. 72–76. The score is in G major, 2/4 time, and features a piano (p) dynamic. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (mm. 72–74) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a rhythmic accompaniment. The second system (mm. 75–76) continues the melodic and rhythmic patterns. Fingerings and articulations are indicated throughout.

Example 2.14a. Beethoven, No. 6, V, mm. 223–30

Example 2.14a shows Beethoven's No. 6, V, mm. 223–30. The score is in G major, 2/4 time, and features a forte (f) dynamic. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (mm. 223–226) shows a full orchestral ensemble including Flutes, Oboes, Clarinets, Bassoons, Horns, Trumpets, Trombones, Violins, Viola, and Cello/Double Bass. The second system (mm. 227–230) continues the orchestral texture. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Example 2.14a. (Continued)

227

Fl. I  
II

Ob. I  
II

Cl. I  
(B $\flat$ ) II

Bsn. I  
II

Hn. I  
(F) II

Tpt. I  
(C) II

Tbn. I  
II

Vln. I  
II

Vla.

Cello  
D. B.

*sf* *sf*

Example 2.14b. Beethoven, No. 6, V, mm. 227–30, Liszt arrangement

tremolando

223

8 8 18

227

*f* *sf*

In Example 2.14b, the process in which Liszt incorporates the dazzling passages draws our attention. While maintaining the two-measure unit according to the bass thematic line, Liszt first alternates between typical tremolos and virtuosic passages in mm. 223–26 (also in the previous unit in mm. 219–22, not shown in the example), then incorporating the bravura passage in every measure in mm. 227–78 and then in every beat in mm. 229–30. One might say that Liszt’s reworking faithfully follows the pacing of Beethoven’s harmonic rhythm. Liszt’s reworking process reinforces the accelerating build-up process inherent in the original, successfully controlling the pacing of the lengthy passage with his careful incorporation of his own virtuosic passages.

In the same arrangement of Beethoven’s Sixth, Examples 2.15a and 2.15b exhibit another instance of achieving resonant sonority through stunning pianistic figuration.

Example 2.15a. Beethoven, No. 6, II, m. 31

31

Fl. I  
II

Ob. I  
II

Cl. I  
(B-) II

Bsn. I  
II

Hn. I  
(B-) II

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello  
soli

Vc. (altri)  
D.B.

*cresc.*

*p*

*dolce*

*p*

*p*

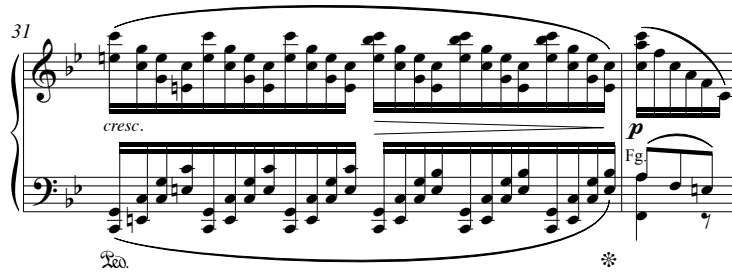
*p*

*p*

*p*

*p*

Example 2.15b. Beethoven, No. 6, II, m. 31, Liszt arrangement



His Sixth, indeed, already dazzled the audience in Paris, Vienna, and London in his concerts of 1839–1840, as discussed earlier, primarily because of its abundant virtuosic figurations: for example, the sonorous pianistic type of passage above frequently appears in the same movement (mm. 11, 29, 38, 43–45, 95–96, 101, 103, 110, and 116). Additionally, Examples 2.16a and 2.16b below show how Liszt radically reworks the massive orchestral tremolos and sustained notes through his typical bravura staggered octaves, yet refreshes them in character with their forceful direction and the marking “*con strepito*” (“with tumult”).<sup>67</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Liszt’s marking “*con strepito*” is also found in his contemporaneous composition the *Études d’exécution Transcendante*, No. 4 in D minor, “Mazeppa” (1840, based on No. 4 of *Grandes études* (1838); published in 1847 and revised in 1851). In this virtuosic composition, the marking is placed in a passage of the bravura consecutive thirds. Liszt seems to require a stronger sound rather than expressive, legato playing with the aid of the marking.

Example 2.16a. Beethoven, No. 5, IV, mm. 290–95

290

Fl. picc.

Fl. II

Ob.

Cl. I  
(C) II

Bsn. I  
II

C. Bn.

Hn.  
(C) II

Trp.  
(C) II

Tbn. I  
II

III

Timp.

Vln. I  
II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

G



Example 2.16b. Beethoven, No. 5, IV, mm. 290–95, Liszt arrangement

The image shows a musical score for a piano arrangement. It consists of two systems of music. The first system covers measures 290 to 292, and the second system covers measures 293 to 295. The music is written for piano, with a treble and bass clef. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like *sf* (sforzando) and *f* (forte). There are also markings for *Rea.* (likely a typo for *Rea.*) and *sempre marcatis.* (sempre marcato). The score is a transcription of a specific passage from Beethoven's No. 5, IV, mm. 290–95, as arranged by Liszt.

In his late arrangements, however, Liszt tends to render tremolos in a less varied and less virtuosic manner. In his rendering of massive orchestral tremolos, in particular, Liszt prefers to deploy simply repeated chordal passages in many instances, as illustrated in Examples 2.17–2.18 below.<sup>68</sup> In Example 2.17b, Liszt focuses on the violin and the cello line, in keeping with the faithful reworking of the original. His rendering creates an astonishingly visual effect for both performers and listeners and also intensifies the *crescendo* effect, providing a textural contrast with the following *pizzicatos* in *pianissimo*.

<sup>68</sup> Other examples are also found in Liszt, No. 1, I, mm. 69–72 and 92–94; No. 4, I, mm. 347–48. The chordal-hammering passages Liszt deployed remind us of the hammering in Beethoven's piano writing, as illustrated in the middle part of the second movement of his Piano Sonata Op. 31, No. 1 in G major, suggesting the direct influence of Beethoven on Liszt.

Example 2.17a. Beethoven, No. 4, II, mm. 100–3

100

Fl.

Ob.

Cl.  
(B $\flat$ )

Bsn.

Hn.  
(Eb)

Trp.  
(Eb)

Timp.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

*cresc.*

*ff*

*pp*

*pizz.*

*arco*

*staccato*

Example 2.17b. Beethoven, No. 4, II, mm. 100–3, Liszt arrangement

100

VI.

Vc.

Timp.

VI. pizz.

*cresc.*

*ff*

*pp*

*p*

*cresc.*

In Example 2.18b, the chordal passages lend a particular massive effect against the main theme, in strong contrast with the following *pianissimo* restatement of the

theme. This simple chordal hammering is unidiomatic to piano writing, and rarely found in his early arrangements. These block-chord passages serve here as pianistic solutions for loud tremolos, which were often rendered earlier in more diverse and virtuosic figurations sweeping the entire keyboard. Liszt changes the sixteenth notes of the tremolos to eighths. He deliberately simplifies the tremolos into this robust hammering, sharply shifting to the unusual texture of the piano and thus creating a particular effect for the massive *tutti*.

Example 2.18a. Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 191–200

The musical score for Example 2.18a, Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 191–200, is a full orchestral arrangement. The score is written for the following instruments:

- Fl. I, II
- Ob. I, II
- Cl. I, II (B $\flat$ )
- Bsn. I, II
- Hn. I, II (F)
- Trp. I, II (F)
- Timp.
- Vln. I, II
- Vla.
- Vc.

The score is in 3/4 time and features a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The woodwinds (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Horn, Trumpet) and strings (Violins, Viola, Violoncello) are marked with *fff* (fortissimo) and *p dolce* (piano dolce). The percussion (Timpani) is marked with *pp* (pianissimo). The score shows a transition from a fortissimo section to a piano section, with the woodwinds and strings playing a simple chordal hammering pattern.

Example 2.18b. Beethoven, No. 8, I, mm. 191–200, Liszt arrangement

[illegible]

It is no mere coincidence to see the similar passage in one of the contemporaneous arrangements, that of Wagner's *Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde* (1867–68):

Example 2.19. Wagner, *Liebtestod*, mm. 67–68, Liszt arrangement

8va

8va

8va

8 ad lib

As in his set of Beethoven Symphonies, Liszt retains the same key, tempo, and meter as Wagner's original. At the climax (mm. 65–69: only mm. 67–68 are shown in Example 2.19), the massive chordal passages render Wagner's tremolos, lending a quite different pianistic texture and instantly arousing our attention.<sup>69</sup>

As observed in both his late Beethoven Symphony arrangements and *Liebestod*, the presence of a simple chordal hammering and its similar function indicate that it may be Liszt's favorite compositional means, at least in his late orchestral arrangements. This chordal hammering is immediately contrasted with more sophisticated, virtuosic figurations such as sonorous arpeggios or rapidly staggering octave tremolos, as often incorporated into his early arrangements.

Liszt's use of such non-pianistic hammering is significant in the context of the repertoire considered in this study. If he deployed the chordal hammering for the massive orchestral effect in his orchestral arrangement, as discussed above for his later set of Beethoven *partitions*, he also uses a different type of hammering on a single pitch to evoke one of the cimbalom techniques in his *Rhapsodies*, as we will observe in Chapter 9. Such hammering, whether it is chordal or reiterates one note, illustrates how deliberately and carefully Liszt selects it to emulate a particular effect of the original orchestra or instrument, even though he could have done it in a far more virtuosic, pianistic manner, given his unimpeachable mastery of the instrument. At the same time, each of the hammerings is distinguishable in its figuration, effect, and sound in accordance with the different source of the music to be arranged. As we will see when

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<sup>69</sup> From m. 44 on, Liszt deploys ascending full chords instead of more virtuosic repeated notes, simulating the intensity of the dynamic level of a violin's tremolo.

considering Liszt's transferral techniques as a whole in the Conclusion, his use of the non-pianistic hammering helps both associate and distinguish the two disparate groups of repertoire.

## **Conclusion**

Liszt proclaimed the intentions underlying his Beethoven *partitions* in his preface, as discussed in Chapter 1. He strove to usher in a new method of piano arrangement by rendering his predecessor's music assiduously. His preface, above all, is a public announcement of his unwavering fidelity to Beethoven. His faithfulness had loomed large in performance accounts and contemporary assessment of his Beethoven *partitions*, as discussed earlier in the present chapter. The critics and reviewers provided specific comments on Liszt's scrupulous rendering, including his detailed notation such as fingering and dynamics, his careful delineation of the intricate orchestral texture, his attentive approach to individual instruments, and his skillful emulation of the massive orchestral sound by creating unheard-of sounds on the piano. These details of his faithful rendering made his *partitions* praiseworthy, exalting him as a genuine interpreter of the master, while simultaneously the same properties were perceived as difficult to comprehend, challenging to perform, and inaccessible to the general audience. The difficulty and exclusivity, therefore, are inextricably linked to the unremitting fidelity in Liszt's Beethoven *partitions*. These qualities in turn help establish Liszt's *partitions* as highly virtuosic arrangements, approachable only to a selected few professional pianists and an elite audience.

The examples and analyses have demonstrated that Liszt successfully and convincingly completed the monumental project of reworking the set of nine Beethoven Symphonies. Liszt's pianistic solutions for transferring the full orchestra are based on his commitment to preserving the spirit of Beethoven's score, as well as his awareness of pianistic limitations and at the same time his transformations of the piano capable of generating any orchestral effect. This aspect is illustrated in his meticulous cues for instrumentation, his rendering of the unheard-of sound-equivalent of both the loud and soft *tutti* sonorities in his own pianistic texture and effects, his clarification of complex orchestral textures, and his focus on the main character of the original with careful selections of orchestral parts.

In addition, Liszt's rendering of sustained sonorities and orchestral tremolos shows that he provides various, appropriate solutions in context for Beethoven's distinctive orchestral effects, while actively reinterpreting the dramatic content of the original, as in his version of the Eroica. Moreover, Liszt often rewrites the original for pianistic considerations, radically transforming it into virtuosic passages on several occasions and thus revealing his capacities as both virtuoso performer and virtuoso composer. Finally, a comparison between his early and late arrangements of Beethoven's Symphonies has disclosed the consistency in his faithful approach to the original but at the same time less use of diverse virtuosic figurations in his late arrangements, as illustrated in his constant use of unidiomatic chordal passages.

Throughout his reworking, Liszt frequently intensifies textural and timbre contrasts intrinsic to the original orchestral score, while simultaneously creating a visually appealing execution equivalent to the original orchestral effects or even

exceeding Beethoven's score. The place where he preserves his fidelity to the "sacred text" of Beethoven becomes simultaneously the place where he exhibits his creativity in order to accommodate and approximate the original successfully in his piano score.

What Liszt did above is all related to his commitment to paying great attention to the orchestral textures, timbres, and effects of Beethoven's Symphonies, making them all available on the piano with pianistic resources, convincing the listener by his successful solutions, and thus establishing his solo piano arrangements as independent from Beethoven's canonic compositions.



## Chapter 3

### ***Partitions of “Sacred Texts” 2: Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* and Two Overtures***

Liszt was an ardent admirer of Berlioz from early in his career. He first encountered Berlioz on the eve of the premiere of the latter’s *Symphonie fantastique* on 4 December 1830, expressing his favorable reaction to the composition, while the older colleague was honored to have such a great virtuoso’s acclaim.<sup>1</sup> From the moment of his encounter with Berlioz, Liszt remained one of the most enthusiastic adherents and advocates of Berlioz’s music, as confirmed by Liszt’s correspondence and writings. Beginning in the late 1830s, Liszt frequently joined in concerts organized by Berlioz or in those comprising several compositions by his older colleague.<sup>2</sup> Later, as a conductor during his Weimar years, Liszt arranged two Berlioz weeks there in 1852 and 1855, where Berlioz conducted his own compositions, while Liszt performed his E-flat major piano concerto

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<sup>1</sup> This is evident in Berlioz’s letter to his father, expressing how honored he was by the presence of “le grand pianist Liszt” and by that artist’s favorable reaction. Cécile Reynaud, “Berlioz, Liszt, and the Question of Virtuosity,” in *Berlioz: Past Present, Future* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2003), ed. Peter Bloom, 109, n. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 61, notes that the joint concerts became legendary, and Heinrich Heine viewed their concerts as the most rewarding of the season in Paris, remarking: “Liszt is the man who relates most closely to Berlioz and knows best how to perform his music”; also cited in Liszt, *An Artist’s Journey*, 220. For the discussion of the Liszt–Berlioz joint concerts in relation to the audience profile, see Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 65. Liszt also performed at the Conservatoire Concerts in Paris in the 1830s, in which Berlioz played a vital role to arrange the concerts and support Liszt’s alignment with Parisian high society.

under Berlioz's baton.<sup>3</sup> Throughout the Berlioz weeks the two musicians expressed their mutual respect.<sup>4</sup>

Liszt's unremitting interest in Berlioz's music is also evident in many of his arrangements of the latter's compositions, which developed over a long period, from 1833 to 1879.<sup>5</sup> After his encounter with Berlioz on the eve of the premiere of the *Symphonie fantastique*, as mentioned earlier, on the following day Liszt attended the premiere in the concert hall of the Paris Conservatoire and offered his wholehearted applause after the performance.<sup>6</sup> Although this premiere already prompted Liszt to consider arranging the symphony, he was convinced through the 2 May 1833 performance of Berlioz's symphony in the Hôtel de L'Europe littéraire in Paris.<sup>7</sup> Liszt's arrangement of the *Symphonie fantastique* received an enthusiastic response from Berlioz, who described it as "astonishing."<sup>8</sup> After Liszt launched into rendering Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* in the early 1833 as a *partition*, Liszt continued the same aesthetic pursuit of the *partition* in transferring Berlioz's two overtures to *Le Roi Lear* (1837) and *Les Francs-Juges* (1845).<sup>9</sup> Liszt also prepared a free arrangement of *Marche des pèlerins* from *Harold en Italie* for piano solo (1837). His diligent undertaking of the arrangement

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<sup>3</sup> *NLA*, book 16, x, n. 2. For Berlioz's conducting on November 17–21, 1852 and February 16–21, 1855, see Wolfram Huschke, *Musik im klassischen und nachklassischen Weimar* (Weimar: Herman Böhlau Nachfolger, 1982), 211–12; for Liszt's performance on 17 February, 1855, see Huschke, *Musik*, 200, 202–203, 211–12.

<sup>4</sup> Reynaud, "Berlioz," 112–13.

<sup>5</sup> Reynaud, "Berlioz," 111, provides a list of Liszt's lifelong project of Berlioz arrangements; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 57–59, also briefly discusses some of the repertoire.

<sup>6</sup> *NLA*, Book 16, x; Hector Berlioz, *Literarische Werke: Erste Gesamtausgabe* (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1904), I, 187.

<sup>7</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 45; Liszt's letter to d'Agoult, dated 3 May 1833, in Franz Liszt and Marie d'Agoult, *Correspondance*, ed. Serge Gut and Jacqueline Bellas (Paris: Fayard, 2001), 57, "I will arrange it [the *Symphonie fantastique*] for piano."

<sup>8</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 50; letter of 30 August 1833 in Hector Berlioz, *Correspondance générale*, ed. Pierre Citron, 8 vols. (Paris: Flammarion, 1972–2003), II, 113.

<sup>9</sup> *NLA*, Book 16, xiii. Liszt's arrangements of Berlioz's overtures will be discussed below.

of *Harold en Italie* for viola solo and piano began in 1836 but extended into the period 1852–1879. A number of his late arrangements were, in fact, carried out during his Weimar years, suggesting the continuum and momentum of his earlier arrangements of the older colleague.<sup>10</sup> In the meantime Liszt also reduced excerpts from Berlioz’s *Benvenuto Cellini* (1852–53) and *La Damnation de Faust* (1860) and provided an independent arrangement of the *Marche au supplice* from the *Symphonic fantastique* (1865), while continuously revising his earlier arrangements such as *Marche des pèlerins* (before 1866).

Liszt’s arrangement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* is considered the most representative among his other arrangements “after” Berlioz, for several reasons. First, Liszt’s *Symphonie fantastique* was the first outcome of his “*partition*” project, the wholehearted and painstaking task of “conscientious” arrangement following the original faithfully as if dealing with a “sacred text” (as discussed in Chapter 1). Second, numerous accounts of the relationship between the two composers have demonstrated their camaraderie, particularly in the 1830s and 1840s when Liszt undertook arranging Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* and the two overtures *Les Franc-Juges* and *Le Roi Lear*.<sup>11</sup>

Third, although Liszt performed portions of the arrangement only four times in public, his renderings dazzled contemporary critics and audience, revealing his

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<sup>10</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 59.

<sup>11</sup> Among the literature on the Berlioz–Liszt relationship, two studies are devoted to their mutual esteem and influence in more detail: Reynaud, “Berlioz” (2003) and Kregor, “Collaboration and Content,” in *Liszt as Transcriber* (2010). Both Reynaud and Kregor investigate the evidence from the correspondence scrupulously to bolster this unique relationship between the two musicians, but at the same time their claims are different from each other. Whereas Reynaud attempts to see the long-lived rapport of the two musicians throughout their careers, Kregor focuses on their “collaboration” centered on the *Symphonie fantastique* arrangement and others produced in the same period of the 1830s and extending a little into the early 1840s.

performing prowess on stage while projecting Berlioz's music.<sup>12</sup> In the concert at the Paris Conservatoire in 1835, for instance, Joseph d'Ortigue observed the orchestral concept embedded in Liszt's playing of the movements of "Bal" and "Marche au supplice": "in everything Liszt has had the goal of applying orchestration to the piano."<sup>13</sup> The most renowned and quoted report is Sir Charles Hallé's recollection of Liszt's performance of "Marche au supplice" in 1836.<sup>14</sup> Hallé's report of Liszt's playing clearly conveys the image of the piano alone creating an effect "even surpassing that of the full orchestra."<sup>15</sup> Not only the massive orchestral sound and effect but also the detailed approach to the variegated instruments of Berlioz's orchestral composition appear in the assessments of Liszt's arrangement, as one critic reported: "It is really prodigious to hear the piano reproduce so powerfully and with such charm all the effects of [the *Symphonie fantastique*], all the little details of the instrumentation."<sup>16</sup> All of the performance accounts above help prove the superiority of Liszt's arrangement and the prowess of his performance with respect to his meticulousness in transferring the original and his creativity in recreating his performance style, respectively.<sup>17</sup>

Finally, Liszt's *Symphonie fantastique* furnished the sole vehicle for Robert Schumann to learn, analyze, and judge the original orchestral composition in his famous

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<sup>12</sup> Three performances in Paris, 1834, 1836, and 1844; and one in Vienna, 1838. For the performance records, see Walker, *Liszt*, I, 292–95; for the three performances in Paris, see Keeling, "Liszt's Appearances in Parisian Concerts, Part II: 1834–1844," at 9, 12, and 21, respectively. Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 60, delineates the dates, locations, movements performed, and brief notes in a table.

<sup>13</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 36; *Gazette musicale de Paris* 2, no. 24 (14 June 1835): 202.

<sup>14</sup> For Hallé's account of Liszt's execution, see C. E. and Marie Hallé, ed., *Life and Letters of Sir Charles Hallé* (London: Smith, Elder, 1896), 37–38; Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 180–81; Williams, *Portrait*, 84–85; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 41–42, n. 5.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid. As the contemporary reviewers such as Hallé had observed, the prevailing literature has drawn attention to the orchestral effects Liszt's score elicits. See Searle, *Music of Liszt*, 7–8; Walker, *Liszt*, I, 180–81; also discussed in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 78–79.

<sup>16</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 36, n. 52 from *Monde musical* 5, no. 16 (9 May 1844), 76.

<sup>17</sup> Among others see Kregor, "Collaboration and Content," in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 41–74.

review, which appeared in the *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* in 1835.<sup>18</sup> Schumann's analysis based on Liszt's arrangement of the symphony has continued to serve as an important means of legitimizing Liszt's quantitative fidelity to the original in the prevailing literature.<sup>19</sup> To begin the discussion of Liszt's *Symphonie fantastique*, I will reassess the ubiquity of Schumann's 1835 review largely in two directions. First, to understand Schumann's review in the context of contemporary comments on Liszt as an arranger, it would be fruitful to relate Schumann's views about Liszt's piano score to Berlioz's favorable attitudes toward Liszt's virtuosity and arrangement. Second, the investigation of Schumann's famous analysis reveals not only the critic's praise for Liszt's precision and fidelity, as existing inquiries into piano arrangements have stressed almost exclusively, but also his "vague" moments in fathoming the original orchestral textures and effects only through Liszt's piano score.<sup>20</sup> The limitations Schumann faced in turn helped set up the understanding of the limitations Liszt must have encountered in his transferral process.

Both Berlioz and Schumann lauded Liszt's ability as an arranger, while simultaneously expressing the piano's incapability of conveying orchestral textures, timbres, and effects. The two critics' assessments represent contemporary remarks on Liszt's arrangement; but more importantly for the current discussion, they raise some problems inherent in the transferral of an orchestral score to a solo-piano setting, paving

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<sup>18</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 244. The original articles appeared in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 3 (1835), no. 1 (3 July): 1–2; no. 9 (31 July): 33–35; no. 10 (4 August): 37–38; no. 11 (7 August): 41–44; no. 12 (11 August): 45–48; no. 13 (14 August): 49–51. English translations in Cone, score, 220–48; "R. Schumann: '[Review of Berlioz: Fantastic Symphony]' (1835)," in *Music Analysis in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Ian Bent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), II, 166–94.

<sup>19</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz"; Schumann: Review.

<sup>20</sup> The issues of Schumann's fathoming moment are also addressed in Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements."

the way to understanding Liszt's transferral techniques in depth and making his successful solutions worthwhile, as musical analysis will flesh out.

### **Contemporary Comments on Liszt's Arrangement: Berlioz and Schumann**

#### *Berlioz's assessment*

Berlioz was generally hostile toward arrangements for the piano and the instrument itself, the sovereign one for the virtuosos of the time:

Does anyone seriously maintain that one can judge the true quality of an orchestral work emasculated in this fashion? . . . Is it not self-evident that the piano, by destroying all sense of instrumentation, by this fact alone places all composers on the same level? . . . For orchestrators, the piano is really a guillotine destined to cut off the heads of all the aristocrats, a guillotine from which only commoners have nothing to fear.<sup>21</sup>

Berlioz believed that the piano was unqualified to reproduce the orchestra, and unable to capture the individual tone color of each instrument, an essential part of orchestral writing. His denigration of the piano as "an instrument that sums up all others" is precisely opposite to the general notion of the time, that is, the superiority of the instrument in piano virtuosity.<sup>22</sup>

Nevertheless, when it came to Liszt's piano virtuosity, Berlioz showed a warm attitude toward it. He praised the virtuoso's orchestral concept in his performance, composition, and interpretation; for instance, he was amazed at Liszt's ability to bring a massive "orchestral" sound into the keyboard:

You can confidently say, adapting Louis XIV: I am the orchestra! I am the chorus and the conductor as well. My piano sings, broods, flashes, thunders. It rivals the keenest bows in swiftness; it has its own brazen

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<sup>21</sup> Reynaud, "Berlioz," 105, modified from *The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, trans. and ed. David Cairns (New York: W. W. Norton, 1975), 111.

<sup>22</sup> Reynaud, "Berlioz," 106.

harmonies and can conjure on the evening air its veiled enchantment of insubstantial chords and fairy melodies, just as the orchestra can and without all the paraphernalia. I need no theatre, no special scenery, no vast construction of tiers and ramps. I don't have to wear myself out taking interminable rehearsals. I don't require a hundred musicians or even twenty—I don't require any at all. . . . A large room with a grand piano in it, and I have a great audience at my command. . . . At once, dazzling inventions spring to life beneath my fingers and rapturous exclamations greet them in return. . . . What a dream! A golden dream such as one dreams when one's name is Liszt.<sup>23</sup>

Although Berlioz denigrated the piano arrangement, he took Liszt's transferral ability seriously and discovered an aesthetic in the medium. The most representative instance is Berlioz's relationship with Liszt's arrangement of his *Symphonie fantastique*; as D. Kern Holoman proposes, Berlioz's subsequent revisions probably reflect Liszt's suggestions in his pianistic renderings.<sup>24</sup> This continuous and mutual compositional process between the two artists is also evident in Berlioz's letter of July 1852 to Liszt about the virtuoso's arrangement of his symphony *Harold en Italie*. In this case, the letter suggests that Liszt's attempts to modify his arrangement of *Harold* were in accord with changes that Berlioz had made:<sup>25</sup>

I found your [Liszt's] score of *Harold*. . . . There will be a lot of things to change in your manuscript [of *Harold*] because of the changes I made in the score after you completed your work. The third movement in particular contains a number of modifications which, I fear, are untranslatable to the piano: it's going to be necessary to sacrifice a lot of sustained notes. I would also kindly ask that you not employ the arpeggiated tremolo that you use in the introduction, in the *left hand*, for this effect on the piano is opposite to the effect in the orchestra and

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<sup>23</sup> Berlioz, *The Memoirs of Hector Berlioz*, 283–84; also cited in Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 54–55.

<sup>24</sup> D. Kern Holoman, *The Creative Process in the Autograph Musical Documents of Hector Berlioz, c. 1818–1840* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1980), 275–76; noted in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 54.

<sup>25</sup> Reynaud, "Berlioz," 111.

makes it difficult to appreciate the rather heavy but relaxed melody of the basses.<sup>26</sup>

Although the letter quoted above discloses the Berlioz–Liszt collaborative process as well as Berlioz’s high regard for Liszt’s arrangement, the important issue for the current discussion is that Berlioz stresses the arranger’s effective transferral as idiomatic to the piano and faithful to the original concept of the orchestra. Berlioz’s *Harold* symphony is written for solo viola and orchestra (1834); Liszt’s *Harold* arrangement is composed for solo viola and piano (1837), and thus this arrangement does not pertain to the main repertoire of the study, that is, an orchestral arrangement for a solo piano or two pianos. Nevertheless, Berlioz’s letter above discloses some specific problems as intrinsic to rendering an orchestral score in pianistic terms. He asserts that some orchestral passages are “untranslatable to the piano” and says that some pianistic substitutions create an effect “opposite to the effect on the orchestra.” In this regard, Berlioz suggests the necessity of adjustments to a new medium: for example, an arranger would have to delete some original notes such as long-held notes (“sacrifice a lot of sustained notes”) in order to make them suitable for the reduced piano score, or the arranger might offer appropriate substitutions to compensate for the original effect.

In the paragraph that follows in the letter, Berlioz continues to address the issue of the arranger’s task, particularly when rendering an individual instrument:

On another subject, don’t you think that the role you give to the viola, greater than the role it plays in the [orchestral] score, alters the physiognomy of the work? . . . The viola should be used in the piano score precisely the way it is used in the original. Here, the piano represents the orchestra, while the viola must remain apart and enfold itself in its own

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<sup>26</sup> Quoted in Reynaud, “Berlioz,” 114; Berlioz, *Correspondance générale*, ed. Pierre Citron (Paris: Flammarion, 1972–), IV, 183–84.



sentimental meanderings; everything else is foreign to it; it *observes* the action but never joins it.<sup>27</sup>

The important role of the viola in the *Harold* symphony is well known, partly because the impetus for composing a concert composition for this particular instrument originated with the request of Paganini.<sup>28</sup> In the second movement, *Marche des pèlerins* (March of the Pilgrims), the central section marked *canto religioso* exhibits probably the most difficult technical challenges for the violist in the entire symphony in allusion to Paganini.<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that beside his *Harold* arrangement, Liszt isolated the *Marche des pèlerins* for his free fantasy for solo piano (1835). In this fantasy, Liszt deploys bravura arpeggiated sixteenth-note figuration in an attempt to emulate the viola's virtuosic display and at the same time adjust it aptly to the pianistic idiom.

The viola represents the symbolic image of Harold as the “quintessential outsider of the orchestra,” in Mark Evan Bonds' interpretation.<sup>30</sup> Just as the instrument rarely plays a prominent role within the family of strings, its symbolic image of Harold is isolated, withdrawn from society.<sup>31</sup> In this regard, the relationship between the solo instrument and the orchestra is important over the course of the symphony; in the movement *Marche des pèlerins*, for example, the Harold theme in the viola is superimposed on the pilgrim's procession, portraying the image of “an individual's solitude” amidst a crowd.<sup>32</sup> This isolation is what Berlioz probably asked Liszt for in his

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<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Reynaud, “Berlioz,” 114; Berlioz, *Correspondance*, IV, 183–84.

<sup>28</sup> Mark Evan Bonds, “Heroes, Anti-Heroes, and Symphonies,” in *After Beethoven: Imperatives of Originality in the Symphony* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 57.

<sup>29</sup> Bonds, “Heroes,” 48.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 57, points out another impetus of using the instrument based on Lord Byron's “melancholy dreamer” in his poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

rendering of the viola in the letter quoted above: the instrument “remains apart” and “never joins” the orchestra’s process. Unlike his free fantasy on *Marche des pèlerins* for solo piano, Liszt’s arrangement of the *Harold* symphony in its entirety for viola and piano is considered a “faithful” rendering, primarily because the solo viola part remains intact throughout.<sup>33</sup> Liszt’s rendering of the viola therefore seems to take into account Berlioz’s request.

In sum, Berlioz’s comments on Liszt’s *Harold* Symphony disclose his concern about the arranger’s role to adhere to the original faithfully and at the same time to adjust it aptly to a new medium. Berlioz’s remarks on the viola in *Harold* can be extrapolated into the treatment of the individual instrument in piano arrangements. Just as Berlioz asks Liszt to understand the character of the viola as intrinsic to the original work, its isolation and its detachment from the orchestra, a piano arranger must comprehend fully the original composer’s intent underlying his or her use of individual instruments or their relationships with the orchestra.

#### *Schumann’s 1835 analysis*

Schumann’s judgment of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* in 1835 was based solely on Liszt’s arrangement of the symphony, as he states: “I must point out that I have only a piano transcription as a basis for my judgment.”<sup>34</sup> Berlioz’s score was completed in 1830, revised until 1832, and performed regularly in Paris from 1832 through 1840, but

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<sup>33</sup> *NLA*, Book 16, xxxiii.

<sup>34</sup> Schumann, “A Symphony by Berlioz,” 233.

not published until 1845.<sup>35</sup> Liszt's score, on the other hand, was completed in September 1833 and subsequently published in November 1834, and thus served as the first and only published version of Berlioz's symphony until 1845.<sup>36</sup> Schumann did not have the full orchestral score of *Symphonie fantastique* when he undertook to write on the symphony. Neither had he heard it, whereas Liszt attended the premiere, as mentioned earlier, as did François-Joseph Fétis, a prominent French critic, who also provided his critical analysis of the symphony based on Liszt's arrangement in the *Revue musicale* on 1 February 1835.<sup>37</sup>

Schumann's analysis consists of four sections: (1) the "form" of the whole, of each movement, of the period, and of the phrase; (2) the "compositional fabric" of harmony, melody, continuity, workmanship, and style; (3) the "specific idea" that the artist wanted to present; and finally (4) the "spirit" that rules over form, material, and idea.<sup>38</sup> It is important to note that Schumann did not reveal that he possessed only a piano score until the second section of analysis of the *compositional fabric*. In the first section, he did not find any difficulties in examining the form, because Liszt's piano

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<sup>35</sup> For the performance records of the *Symphonie fantastique*, including not only the performances in Paris from 1832 through 1840 but also those in Italy during 1831 and 1832 as well as those throughout Germany during 1842 and 1843, see Nicholas Temperley, foreword to *Hector Berlioz, New Edition of the Complete Works*, vol. 16, *Symphonie fantastique* (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1972), XII.

<sup>36</sup> The first edition of Liszt's piano arrangement published by Maurice Schlesinger in Paris could have appeared in the subsequent year because he paid the printing costs himself. *NLA*, Book 16, xi; Huschke, *Musik*, III, 99, Berlioz's letter to Humbert Ferrand.

<sup>37</sup> François-Joseph Fétis, "Episode in the Life of an Artist: Grand Fantastic Symphony by Hector Berlioz, Opus 4, Piano-Score by Franz Liszt," trans. Cone, in *Berlioz: Fantastic Symphony*, 215–19, at 217. Fétis's analysis appeared several months earlier than Schumann's analysis, which is considered the latter critic's response to the former critic's negative views about the symphony. The *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* indeed published a German version of Fétis's article (19 June and 23 June 1835) as a prelude to Schumann's six-part analysis (July and August 1835). At the same time, Heinrich Panofka, a correspondent for the *NZfM*, provided an opposite view of the symphony to Fétis around the same time as Fétis's articles appeared, on 27 February and 3 March 1835, under the title "Ueber Berlioz und seine Composition," which served as an impetus for Schumann's analysis of the composition. See Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 221.

<sup>38</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 226.

*partition* preserves the structural elements of the original and even its measure numbers. His arrangement keeps the original intact in form, melody, supporting harmony, as well as basic information regarding instrumentation. In addition, the lack of a full orchestral score did not necessarily hamper Schumann's understanding, as he discusses the relationships between themes and their developments in a clear sense throughout the composition and praises the counterpoint of Berlioz's music as masterfully worked out.<sup>39</sup> As we will see in the musical examples, Schumann's comprehensive assessment of the orchestral structure and texture in turn proved Liszt's artistry in clarifying the primary themes and interweaving the texture.

When Schumann arrived at the section of the *compositional fabric*, however, he found it necessary to reveal that he could not successfully complete his analysis with only the piano arrangement, because the section deals with instrumentation, intricate orchestral textures, and distinctive timbres, all of which provide problems in the transferring process to the keyboard.

At the outset, I must point out that I have only a piano transcription as a basis for my judgment, albeit one that indicates the most important details of instrumentation. Even if this were not the case, everything seems to me conceived and worked out so completely in orchestral terms, with each instrument so exactly placed and exploited, so to speak, with regard for its basic sonorous quality, that a good musician could prepare a passable score from the arrangement—naturally excepting the new combinations and orchestral effects on which Berlioz is known to lavish his attention.<sup>40</sup>

Schumann began with praise for Liszt's meticulous notation by providing his comments on "the most important details of instrumentation." He further suggested that one could

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<sup>39</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 236.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 233; also the part quoted in Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 2, see note 3, and the entirety of it quoted in Van Dine, "Musical Arrangements," 115–16.

reproduce a “passable score” of the original orchestral composition “from the arrangement.”

But at the same time Schumann found it difficult through only the piano arrangement to grasp “the new combinations and orchestral effects” of Berlioz’s score. In fact, when he turned to Berlioz’s virtuosity in orchestration, Schumann must have felt the need to remind the reader that the source available for him was limited: “for the sake of completeness, let us now add a few remarks about the symphony as an orchestral composition and about Liszt’s piano transcription.”<sup>41</sup> Schumann pointed out that from the piano arrangement it might be possible to figure out the solo instruments but impossible for even the liveliest imagination to capture the idea of the various combinations of instruments and their special effects adequately.<sup>42</sup> He also referred to “special effects” that Berlioz creates through distinctive individual instruments such as “muffled drums, harps, muted horns”; those effects, in his sense, are also impossible to be rendered properly in the piano score.<sup>43</sup>

Although Schumann had to take a step back at certain points and fathom what the orchestral score contained, the critic pursued his acclaim of Liszt’s artistry at the conclusion of the “compositional fabric” section:

Franz Liszt’s piano transcription deserves extended discussion. . . . Liszt has applied so much industry and enthusiasm and genius that the result, like an original work summarizing his profound studies, and must be considered as a complete manual of instruction in the art of playing the piano from score. This kind of interpretive art, so different from the filigree work of the virtuoso—the various kinds of touch that it demands, the effective use of the pedal, the clear interlacing of individual voices, and grasp of the texture as a single block of sound; in short, the thorough knowledge of the medium and of the many secrets

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<sup>41</sup> Schumann, “A Symphony by Berlioz,” 243.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 243; Van Dine, “Musical Arrangements,” 111–12.

<sup>43</sup> Schumann, “A Symphony by Berlioz,” 243.

that the piano still hides—this can only be the work of a master and genius of performance such as Liszt above all others is well known to be. But in such a case the piano arrangement need not fear being heard side by side with an orchestral performance; indeed, Liszt recently played it publicly in Paris as the introduction to a later symphony by Berlioz [the *Mélologue*, a sequel to the *Fantastic*].<sup>44</sup>

First, Schumann's comments stress the educational benefits of Liszt's arrangement ("a complete manual of instruction in the art of playing the piano from score"). More importantly for the current discussion, Schumann's observations uncover Liszt's ability largely in three respects: Liszt's "profound studies" of the original, his "interpretive art" in his transferral, and his "thorough knowledge of the medium [the piano]." All of these properties ultimately make Liszt's piano arrangement equally powerful to the orchestral score in public performance ("the piano arrangement need not fear being heard side by side with an orchestral performance").

Furthermore, Schumann provided some details of Liszt's "interpretive art" in his transferral. The specifics Schumann observed are useful for understanding some of the important techniques Liszt often deploys in his orchestral arrangements. Schumann first points out that Liszt's "interpretive art" is "so different from the filigree work of the virtuoso." As we will see, many excerpts from Liszt's arrangements demonstrate that ostensibly virtuosic pianistic figurations represent his thoughtful renderings of the original in accordance with his interpretation. In addition, Schumann characterized Liszt's "interpretive art" as one that requires "the various kinds of touch" and "the effective use of the pedal." This comment recalls Liszt's emphasis on "the performer's

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<sup>44</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 244; the original, *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 3, no. 12 (August 11, 1835): 47. For different translations, see Robert Schumann, *On Music and Musicians* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1946), 178. For his study and analysis of the Liszt–Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*, see D. Kern Holoman, *Berlioz* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989), 110.

wit” when rendering his *partition* (Chapter 1): Liszt expects a pianist to perform his pianistic renderings of certain orchestral parts by using the resources available on the piano, including various articulations, attacks, and pedals. Schumann further related to Liszt’s interpretive skills “the clear interlacing of individual voices” and “grasp[ing] the texture as a single block of sound.” In many instances of Liszt’s renderings, as we will also observe, Liszt displayed his artistry in delineating an entangled orchestral texture clearly and heightening blocks of sounds effectively.

In the spectrum of Liszt’s transferral and reworking in the repertoire under study, the elements pertaining to his “interpretive art” in Schumann’s assessment are similarly extrapolated into Liszt’s two-piano arrangements of his own symphonic poems and his reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-band music. Although each group of the repertoire will be discussed in Parts II and III, it will be fruitful to briefly introduce some of the examples here. As for the use of the virtuosic figurations, they represents not just Liszt’s showcase but his genuine attempts to heighten the special orchestral effects in some cases in his two-piano arrangement (Example 7.1 in Chapter 7), or the filigree intended to emulate cimbalom-playing in his Rhapsodies (Example 9.6 in Chapter 9). Liszt also treats the pedal as an effective vehicle to adhere to the model, as it is used to evoke the distinctive sound of the cimbalom (Examples 9.1–9.2 in Chapter 9). Although each repertoire group is unique because it has a different existing source, whether orchestral music by others or Liszt himself or Gypsy-ensemble music in a completely different tradition, some of the common compositional techniques and aesthetics underlying them relate the disparate groups of repertoire to each other.

To conclude, both Berlioz and Schumann acclaimed Liszt's ability as an arranger and interpreter, while simultaneously addressing the limitations of the piano itself and the piano arrangement. Berlioz's comments on Liszt's arrangement of the *Harold* symphony demonstrate how effectively the arranger could emulate the original instrumental effect as idiomatic to the piano and be faithful to the composer's intent. In Schumann's review of 1835, although the places in which Schumann was unclear about the orchestral textures and timbres occupy a minor portion of his analysis, they reflect problems that Liszt would have encountered in his transferring process. The specific characteristics of Liszt's "interpretive art" that Schumann describes help us to understand some of Liszt's significant transferral and reworking techniques. The comments of Berlioz and Schumann thus help set the stage of understanding how effectively Liszt responds to the limitations and how convincingly he offers his solutions in his pianistic considerations, as the following musical analyses will substantiate.

### **Liszt's Solutions for Orchestral Complexities: Clarification of Thematic Lines**

Among the model composers in Liszt's group of *partitions*, Berlioz exploits a multi-layered orchestral texture more frequently than any others. Liszt's responses to the challenge of rendering it on the piano invite more comment. Examples 3.1a and 3.1b demonstrate how scrupulously Liszt captures the simultaneity of the disparate orchestral textures and how carefully he clarifies and interweaves them into his piano score.



Example 3.1a. Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*, III, mm. 131–37

Example 3.1b. *Symphonie fantastique*, III, mm. 131–37, Liszt arrangement

The image shows a musical score for a piano arrangement of the third movement of Liszt's 'Symphonie fantastique'. It consists of three systems of music, each for the Piano (Pno.). The first system (mm. 131-133) features a melody in the right hand with a slur and the instruction 'sempre pronunciato il canto' above it, and a piano accompaniment in the left hand. The second system (mm. 134-135) shows a continuation of the melody and accompaniment, with a 'VI.' marking above the right hand and 'pp dolce calando' below the left hand. The third system (mm. 136-137) continues the piece, with a 'ppp' marking and 'quasi niente' instruction. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, stems, and dynamic markings.

In mm. 131–34 of Liszt’s score, the main melody in violin II is emphasized with a different stem direction, slurs, and “*sempre pronunciato il canto*” (“the melody always brought out”), while the countermelody 1 for violin I and the accompaniment for the low strings are delineated in the middle and low registers of the keyboard, respectively. Liszt makes three adjustments: first, moves the register of the violin’s main theme an octave lower. Second, he transforms the accompaniment by adding an octave leap down to the low strings. This change makes the accompaniment idiomatic to the piano and the execution more comfortable. Finally, he completely eliminates the woodwind parts, which act like a countermelody 2, and in this way he makes the main theme more discernible. These modifications enable Liszt to concentrate on the main string parts, delineate the stratified texture of strings in the piano score neatly, and make the string

parts manageable by two hands. The lowered register in both violin and low strings also results in a heavier sound and thus creates a different effect from the original.

On the surface Liszt's type of reworking in the passage above (mm. 131–34) seems ubiquitous in his orchestral arrangements. However, when we juxtapose the passage with the following one from m. 135, Liszt's purpose underlying his ostensibly usual transferral becomes more focused: to create an effective contrast between the two passages. In the orchestral score, the two four-measure units (mm. 131–34 and 135–38) are not distinguishable from each other with respect to texture. In his piano score, however, Liszt contrasts and juxtaposes the two phrases in three ways: (1) the lowered register of the violin in the first phrase is moved back to the original register, an octave higher, in the second phrase; (2) the woodwinds parts as countermelody, completely absent in the first phrase, are rendered in the tenor register of the keyboard in the second phrase; and (3) the accompanimental patterns become more varied in the second phrase. For contrast (2), adding the countermelody the second time through makes clear that it is the secondary part. Liszt deliberately eliminates the woodwinds then brings them back in an attempt to emphasize the main theme and thus keep the integrity of the original.

To heighten the contrasts (1)–(3) in the second phrase (from m. 135), Liszt exploits four-part texture and four-hand technique in order to accommodate a distinctive articulation of each voice. Liszt's newly devised accompanimental patterns—the rolled *staccato* chords and the tremolo-like figurations—increase the level of textural disparity and thus the technical demands. Liszt's reworking ultimately develops and converts the consistent orchestral texture into a more diversified texture. The various elements

coalesce simultaneously on the monochromatic piano, creating a remarkable timbral interplay on the keyboard.

Moreover, the dynamic level of the entire orchestral passage proceeds in a sophisticated manner through the *piano* dynamic (m. 131), gradually fading out to “almost nothing”—*pppp* “*quasi niente*” (m. 137). In Liszt’s version, the dynamic level further develops in a more systematic and delicate manner: the *piano* for the first phrase (m. 131) is developed to *pp dolce calando* (m. 135) for the second phrase and then *ppp* “*quasi niente*” (m. 137). As the dynamic changes from *p* to *pp* and *ppp*, the register of the soprano moves an octave higher. The result is Liszt’s enhancement of the delicacy in dynamic and sound intrinsic to Berlioz’s score.

Liszt’s modifications discussed above—including registral alteration, elimination and addition, various pianistic figurations and textures, and dynamic control—help him to render the orchestral texture and thematic lines more transparent. At the same time those modifications demonstrate Liszt’s novel approach to the idea of contrast to sustain the musical interest, which otherwise might have been reduced if he had attempted to render it in a literal manner. In the rendering of the second phrase of Example 3.1b, in particular, Liszt displays his artistry in the use of the four-hand technique, the textural change against the uniform orchestral texture, alongside his sophisticated manner with the dynamic levels.

#### *Liszt’s notation*

In many of his piano compositions Liszt notates the melodic line in large type and the accompaniment in smaller type; moreover, he attempts to capture the orchestral character by delineating the parts using stems of different directions, such as upward stems for the

upper part and downward ones for the lower part.<sup>45</sup> Liszt extends this notational experiment in his orchestral arrangements. As shown in Example 3.1b above, the melodic lines played by the violin and the horns, as accentuated by Liszt's notational cues, are distinguished from the accompaniment parts in the size of type.

The surface distinction between melody and accompaniment, however, becomes less remarkable than what his reworkings reveal on a deeper level. To draw on Gooley's concept of Liszt's "orchestrality," as discussed earlier in the Liszt–Beethoven *partitions* (see Chapter 2), the composer has a tendency to "multiply timbres, stratify registers, differentiate dynamics, and recompose textures that made the orchestra an appropriate metaphor for his playing as a whole."<sup>46</sup> He pursues diverse layers of sounds and expression as well as constant shifts of sensation, including a complexity of texture that requires three or four independent layers from two hands, a single hand that manages contrasting types of articulations, rapid shift of registers that often demand hand-crossing, and rich, detailed notational practices.<sup>47</sup>

Liszt's "orchestrality" is applicable to Example 3.1b, elucidating the underlying aesthetics of his distinctive notation. In mm. 135–37, the thumb of the left hand presents a sustained melody in the warm tenor register, while the same hand simultaneously plays *staccato* chords in the accompaniment. Similarly, the right hand is spread to hold the melody in doubled octaves while executing the delicate thirty-second notes between the upper and lower octaves of the melody. All of the finger movement is managed in a soft dynamic and a gradual *decrescendo* from *pp dolce calando* to *ppp quasi niente*,

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<sup>45</sup> *NLA*, ed. Zoltán Gárdonyi and István Szelényi (1969), vii.

<sup>46</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 36.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

demanding more independence and flexibility of the fingers. In addition, in Liszt's use of three-or four-hand texture, a single hand is required to manage contrasting types of articulation, texture, and figuration. Liszt's distinctive notation thus represents his response to intricate nuances of orchestral textures and timbres.

### **Exploitation of register**

Register alteration represents one of the essential techniques in Liszt's reworking. It occurs more frequently than any other technique throughout his orchestral arrangements. Edward Cone views the adjustment of register as one of the limitations of the piano arrangement in his comments on Schumann's review of Liszt's *Symphonie fantastique*; he states that the piano arrangement does not always preserve Berlioz's voice leading because of pianistic considerations, and thus "sometimes Berlioz's bass becomes Liszt's tenor, etc."<sup>48</sup> The previous literature has focused primarily on Liszt's registral adjustments as a solution to clarifying the melodic lines of the orchestral score; in other words, without such a device, the melodic lines would have been confused with the accompanimental parts because of their proximity.<sup>49</sup> For this reason, the literature has paid attention to Liszt's registral alterations only on the surface, by focusing on whether he raised or lowered the melodic line an octave in order to prevent the entanglement of the line from other accompanimental voices, without taking into account the context that defines the effect and function of the technique.

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<sup>48</sup> Schumann, "A Symphony by Berlioz," 236, n. 27.

<sup>49</sup> Hughes, "Liszt's Solo Piano Transcriptions," 143; Cory, "Franz Liszt's *Symphonies de Beethoven*," 32–33; Domokos, "'Orchestrationen des Pianoforte,'" 298.

The wide spectrum of the technique's characteristics, purposes, and effects, however, invites further examination. The examples below demonstrate how Liszt's registral exploitation contributes to the idea of contrast, as was observed earlier in Example 3.1b. At the most basic level, registral alteration helps Liszt to differentiate the repetition of the thematic idea by placing it in another octave, usually an octave higher. The technique is also used to heighten the contrast between a *forte* passage and a *piano* passage by placing the former an octave lower or the latter an octave higher, and similarly to suggest the contrast between *tutti* and solo passages and between different groups of instruments such as woodwinds and strings. Examples 3.2a and 3.2b illustrate how Liszt intensifies the contrast between woodwinds and strings by lowering the original pitch level of the strings an octave.

Example 3.2a. Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*, IV, mm. 152–57

58

Flute

Oboe

Cl. (C)

Hn. Bb

Hn. Eb

Bsn.

Piston  
Tpt. Bb

Tpt. Bb

T. Tbn.

B. Tbn.

Oph.

Timp. 1

Timp. 2

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

D. B.

*f*

*dim.*

*ff*

*mf*

*f*

*dim.*

*muta in B $\flat$*



Example 3.2b. *Symphonie fantastique*, IV, mm. 152–57, Liszt arrangement

In the orchestral score, the contrast in orchestral timbre between the woodwinds and strings is immediately noticeable. Although the persistent dotted rhythms do not distinguish the two groups, the contrast is intensified by the juxtaposition of the two blocks of sounds: Db-major and G-minor chords, respectively. In the piano score, however, the difficulty in rendering contrasting orchestral timbres is one of the limitations, as contemporaneous critics such as Hoffman, Schumann, and Berlioz already noted.<sup>50</sup> Yet Liszt turns such a difficulty into an opportunity. His registral exploitation serves as one of the effective vehicles, as in Example 3.2b above. It helps to keep up the interest of the persistent dotted rhythm, which would otherwise sound monotonous and redundant in note-against-note transcription. It also creates a startling visual effect by alternating the two groups across an expanded keyboard register. More effectively, the span of alternation is increasingly curtailed as the passage progresses in Liszt's rendering, lending the impression of acceleration and thus further heightening the spectacle.

<sup>50</sup> For the former, see Chapter 1; for the latter two, see above.

Examples 3.3a and 3.3b illustrate Liszt's registral adjustment on a more sophisticated level, including how he combined it here with his transformation of the figuration, juxtaposing the passage with the previous and following ones, and thus achieving the maximum contrast.

Example 3.3a. Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*, III, mm. 49–58

The musical score for Example 3.3a, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, III, mm. 49–58, is a full orchestral score. It includes parts for the following instruments: Flute 1, Flute 2, Oboe 1, Oboe 2, Clarinet 1, Clarinet 2, Horn I/II, Horn IV (C), Bassoon, Violin I, Violin II, Viola I, Viola II, Cello, and Double Bass. The score is written in 3/4 time and features a complex arrangement of woodwinds and strings. The woodwinds play a prominent role in the first half of the excerpt, while the strings take over in the second half. The score includes a variety of dynamics such as *f*, *p*, *sf*, *cresc.*, and *pp*, as well as articulation marks like accents and staccato. The woodwinds play a prominent role in the first half of the excerpt, while the strings take over in the second half.

Example 3.3b. *Symphonie fantastique*, III, mm. 49–58, Liszt arrangement

In mm. 51–52 and 57–58 of the piano score, Liszt transforms the original octave leap into his unique pianistic figuration, drawing our attention to his rendering. In the orchestral score, violin II and viola have octave leaps in a contrasting direction. Liszt did not attempt to render the two types of leaps simultaneously, because it would be simply impossible for one hand to realize both. Yet he was astutely aware of the details of the leaping figure. His solution was to focus on the up–down leap in violin II in mm. 51–52, and then the opposite direction of the down–up leap in the viola in mm. 57–58.

In both cases, mm. 51–52 and 57–58, Liszt dramatizes each leap by his registral manipulation. Consequently, the leaping figuration challenges the pianist to further “leap” over the keyboard. This execution generates a disjunct and clumsy movement, denying any comfortable position to the pianist but seeking to capture the essence of the original. In addition, because of his focus on the details of the different direction of the leap, the leaping movement from the pianist is not consistently in one direction but

different in a contrasting direction, earlier up–down and later down–up, creating a different type of visual effect. The content of the leap is therefore Berlioz’s but its re-creation is Liszt’s own.

Furthermore, this leaping figuration produces a contrast with the rolled chords in the accompaniment, which has its own character with the markings *una corda* and *placido* (“calm” or “placid”). The rolling happens at the same time as the leaping, earlier in the opposite direction at mm. 51ff or in the same direction at m. 57. The leaping figuration is also juxtaposed with the contrasting previous and following passages horizontally; the surrounding passages are characterized by uniform rhythm in both hands and chromatically stepwise descending motion, marked *poco agitato con anima*. This contrast would have been more noticeable in the original because of the timbral contrast between strings and woodwinds, which is lacking in the piano. Liszt’s emphasis on the leaping strings is part of his solution to the confinement. The textural and timbral contrast is thus inherent in Berlioz’s version but revitalized in Liszt’s.

Liszt’s rendering of Example 3.3b thus represents his sensitive approach to the details of the leap in the original, incorporating them in his strategic plan. Moreover, he dramatizes the effect of the leap with a skillful use of the pianistic resource of register. His exploitation of register and his transformation of the leaping figure are both used to convey an effective contrast to the overall static passage. His rendering also reinvigorates the contrast as well as the effect of the contrast.

Examples 3.4a and 3.4b also illustrate the simultaneous presentation of registral change with virtuosic pianistic figuration and the resultant startling effect.

Example 3.4a. Berlioz, *Symphonie fantastique*, V, mm. 65–70

The musical score for Example 3.4a, Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*, V, mm. 65–70, is a full orchestral score. It is written for a large orchestra, including woodwinds, brass, and strings. The score is in 2/4 time and features a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The music is marked with a forte (ff) dynamic throughout. The score is divided into two systems, each containing five staves. The first system includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Flute Piccolo (Fl. picc.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Clar.), Cor (Cor.), Bassoon (Fag.), Trombone (Tromb.), Ophicleide (Oph.), Trumpet (Timp.), and Viola. The second system includes parts for Violin (Viol.), Viola, and a section labeled 'unis' (unison). The music is characterized by rapid sixteenth-note passages in the woodwinds and strings, and a steady, rhythmic pattern in the brass and percussion.

Example 3.4b. *Symphonie fantastique*, V, mm. 65–70, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 3.4b shows measures 65-70 of the Liszt arrangement of the fifth movement of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. The score is in B-flat major and 4/4 time. It features a rapid, repeated sixteenth-note pattern in the strings, which is transformed into a pianistic figuration. The score includes dynamic markings such as *ff*, *marcatissimo*, and *rinforz.*, as well as articulation marks like *up* and *down*. The notation shows a significant register shift in measure 66, extending the range of the keyboard to five octaves.

The repeated sixteenth-note pattern of the strings is transformed into a pianistic figuration, which alternates octaves or chords between the hands and aims for both rapidity and physicality in performance. This rapid passagework becomes more visually effective by an abrupt shift to a higher register in m. 66, extending the range of the keyboard to five octaves in the middle of swiftly alternating the two hands. Then in m. 67, the passage is back down, and then down another octave, then in m. 68 down a further octave, leaping all over the keyboard to convey the intensity of Berlioz's registrations.

In conclusion, the registral alteration is one of the significant techniques in Liszt's transferal throughout his *partitions* in general and those of Berlioz's music in particular. Liszt found the technique essential to accommodate an orchestral texture that spreads over a wide range of the keyboard. The frequency in its appearance and the diversity in its character and purpose represent Liszt's fascination with registral exploitation. His registral change helps to heighten the contrast intrinsic to the original and extends the

contrast into his own version of combining virtuosic figurations. Most of all, it creates distinctive visual effects, including hands jumping back and forth or leaping across the keyboard, in an attempt to approximate the register of the orchestral score.

The discussion of Liszt's transferral in his *Symphonie fantastique* has focused on how meticulously he delineates Berlioz's multi-layered orchestral textures in the piano score and how ingeniously he turns the consistent orchestral texture into a virtuosic pianistic one (Example 3.1), as well as how variously and effectively he experiments with register to heighten the contrast intrinsic to the original and at the same time to recreate it in his own terms (Examples. 3.2–3.4). Whereas Liszt's *Symphonie fantastique* has received continual attention from a number of scholars, Liszt's *partitions* of Berlioz's two overtures *Les Francs-Juges* and *Le Roi Lear* have been not examined in detail. Continuing what he did earlier, during the first half of the 1830s, the following discussion illustrates Liszt's multi-faceted transferrals and reworkings in his *partitions* of Berlioz's overtures during the second half of the decade.

### **Liszt's *partitions* of Berlioz's Overtures**

The relationship Liszt had with Berlioz through his *Symphonie fantastique* arrangement beginning in 1833 was continued in the second half of the 1830s when he undertook the older colleague's overtures to his operas *Les Francs-Juges* (The Judges of the Secret Court) and *Le Roi Lear* (King Lear).<sup>51</sup> The consistency of Liszt's faithfulness to the

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<sup>51</sup> Bickley, "The Concert Overtures," 70, clarifies the dates of Berlioz's overtures: the *Francs-Juges* overture was completed in 1826, then published in parts in 1833 and in a complete score in 1836; the *Roi Lear* overture was published in full score and parts in 1840. *NLA*, Book 16, xiv–xv, elucidates the chronology of Liszt's arrangements: Liszt arrangement of the *Francs-Juges* overture was made in 1833, around the same time as his *Symphonie fantastique*, but its first edition had to wait until 1845 (Paris,

original has been seen as relating the two groups of the *Symphonie fantastique* and overture *partitions*, as evident in the comment by the editors of the *Neue Ausgabe* on Liszt's overture arrangements that he "followed the original score as precisely as he did with *Symphonic fantastique*."<sup>52</sup> As mentioned earlier in the Introduction, Liszt's *Roi Lear* arrangement does not appear in the group of *partitions* in his catalogue of 1877, yet it is aligned with his previous *partitions* of Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique* and *Les Francs-Juges* because of the shared transferral aesthetic that underscores the arranger's faithfulness.

Berlioz's overtures to the operas *Les Francs-Juges* and *Le Roi Lear* have no explicit program affixed to the score as with the *Symphonie fantastique*. The literary models of the two operas, as indicated immediately in the titles, are considered to be based on a medieval incident in the trial of the "Free Judges" and Shakespeare's *King Lear*, respectively.<sup>53</sup> *Les Francs-Juges* is a *Freischütz*-like tale of heroism and intrigue set in the German Middle Ages, whereas the story of *Le Roi Lear* evolves around the clash between the deserted King Lear and his youngest daughter Cordelia. Despite the literary sources, Berlioz did not provide any detailed explanation of his overtures in his prose writings. For this reason, the existing literature has tended to overlook the programmatic basis for Berlioz's musical choices in his overtures, although scholars have suggested that his descriptive orchestral writing is used to portray or evoke a certain

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Richault). Liszt completed his *Roi Lear* arrangement by 1837 (Reynaud, "Berlioz," 121, n.16) or by February 1838 at the latest (Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 56), but its first edition did not appear until 1987, one hundred years after Liszt's death, because it was long thought to be lost. For this reason, it was not performed during Liszt's lifetime but first by Leslie Howard in London on 10 October 1987. Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 55, notes that for Liszt's *Francs-Juges*, a fragment of an autograph sketch around 1837 suggests that the arrangement went through multiple iterations in the 1830s until it was published in 1845.

<sup>52</sup> *NLA*, Book 16, xiii, xv.

<sup>53</sup> For Berlioz's relationship with *Roi Lear*, see his *Mémoires*, ed. and trans. David Cairns (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), 152, 157.



image of a character or the overall mood of the play.<sup>54</sup> Berlioz was probably aware that an overture, being necessarily a short composition, would be incapable of portraying every detail of the original play through musical devices.<sup>55</sup> Nevertheless, a number of scholars have reassessed Berlioz's writing and discovered some useful evidence of the programmatic content, particularly for the *Roi Lear* overture.<sup>56</sup> For this reason, it is more fruitful to consider correspondence between Berlioz's overtures and his literary models not in detail but in the overall mood or portrayal of the main character. The musical analyses that follow therefore take into account certain programmatic ideas inherent in Berlioz's music and Liszt's responses to them, while continuing to investigate Liszt's transferral and reworkings in keeping with his "*partition*" project.

### **Liszt's Solutions for Orchestral Complexities**

Berlioz's predilection for a polyrhythmic texture in his orchestral music ranges from the simplest version consisting of only melody and accompaniment to a more intricate version in a combination of different rhythms, in which each rhythm is distinguished from the other layers in its note-values and instrumentation.<sup>57</sup> For a multi-rhythmic combination, transferral to a piano score in a literal manner is impossible. Liszt generally attempts to limit omissions

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<sup>54</sup> For the discussions on this interpretation among others, see Donald Francis Tovey, *Essays in Music Analysis, Vol. IV: Illustrative Music* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937; reprint and ed., 1965), 83–84; Leon B. Plantinga, "Berlioz's Use of Shakespearean Themes," *Yale French Studies* 33 (1964): 72–79, at 73–74. Gordon Thomas Sanford, "The Overtures of Hector Berlioz: A Study in Musical Style" (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 1964), *passim*. Sanford's study, despite its date, still provides the most comprehensive survey of Berlioz's overtures.

<sup>55</sup> R. W. S. Mendl, "Berlioz and Shakespeare, Part I," *The Chesterian* 29/182 (April, 1955): 99; cited in Deborah, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 48–49.

<sup>56</sup> Deborah M. Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture to King Lear, Opus 4: Problems and Solutions," *Current Musicology* 35 (January 1983): 46–56, *passim*.

<sup>57</sup> One of the most complex examples of a polyrhythmic texture is found in a passage of Berlioz's *Benvenuto Cellini* Overture, mm. 355–58, which presents six different rhythms simultaneously.

in his orchestral arrangements, but for those cases of polyrhythmic textures his solution is often a drastic elimination of some parts of the accompaniment in order to illuminate the main theme. Yet he retains a shrewd sense of reworking in his pianistic considerations by turning this limitation into opportunity.

Examples 3.5a and 3.5b demonstrate how Liszt attempts to clarify the melodic lines against the multi-layered orchestral texture through judicious deletions, layout, and insight into pianistic techniques and resources.

Example 3.5a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 152–58

152

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Clar. *mf*

Cor. I. II.

Fag.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Example 3.5b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 152–58, Liszt arrangement

la mélodie *mf* et très distincte

les accompagnements *p*

In the orchestral score, Example 3.5a, the flute, oboe, and clarinet play the primary theme, in a march rhythm, aptly conveying the military program of the overture.<sup>58</sup> On top of the martial theme other disparate layers of textures are superimposed. Violin I plays the countermelody with its distinctive rhythmic character in light *staccato*, while the remaining instruments accompany, each with its own rhythmic profile: the syncopated horns, in particular, do not coincide with the main theme.

In this multi-layered orchestral texture and rhythm, Liszt's solution is, first, to provide meticulous cues for the instruments that take a major role in the thematic statement: flute, oboe, and clarinet in m. 151. As already observed in his aim for the specific designations of the instruments (see Chapter 1), Liszt regarded these designations not as "superfluous" but as integral to the essence of the original. In the case of Example 3.5b, without the instrument cues, the performer or reader would have lost the upbeats of the main theme—which is further highlighted by Liszt's fingering 3–2—against the more active countermelody of violin I in the middle register of the keyboard. In addition, Liszt's emphasis on the primary theme extends to his performance markings of "the melody *mf* and very distinct" in contrast with "the accompaniments *p*." Liszt's selection of instrumental and performing markings reflects his attempts to clarify the main thematic line in the midst of the intricate orchestral texture.

While remaining attentive to the melodic lines, both main theme and countermelody, Liszt sacrifices the remaining parts of the accompaniment: the syncopated rhythm in the horns and the static *staccatos* in the bassoon, although he replaces the pulsed strings with an arpeggio in the left hand, more idiomatic on the piano. Had he attempted to offer a literal

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<sup>58</sup> Sandford, "Overtures of Hector Berlioz," 57.

rendering by including the heterogeneity of the rhythmic patterns from the horns and bassoons, it would have diminished the clarity of the thematic line as well as the rhythmic interplay between main theme and other parts. For the string accompaniment, however, he transforms the repeated chords into a pianistic pattern of his own, such as a rising arpeggio in contrary motion to the countermelody of violin I. Although the Ab and Eb on beats 2 and 3 of m. 153 are added to the violin I countermelody and taken from the pulsing strings, his rendering aptly converts the orchestral texture into pianistic terms.

The thematic line alternates between the hands (as marked in circles on the score), requiring a hand-crossing technique and thus creating an additional visual effect. It seems to be deliberate for Liszt to present the thematic line across the hands in order to preserve and continue the distinctive articulation of violin I's rhythmic and melodic profile in the middle register. The characteristic countermelody of the violin in turn requires another layer of difficulty in execution against the sustained thematic notes. Despite such a technical challenge, Liszt transfers the two independent layers of the theme and countermelody simultaneously in the right hand. At the same time he turns his rendering into his own virtuosic display by managing the two different layers with all ten fingers. His deployment of hand-crossing, although ubiquitous in his piano music, serves here as an effective means not only to create a visual dimension of playing but also to facilitate the clear execution of the two independent layers. Liszt's rendering ultimately does not aim for a comfortable finger or hand position for the pianist, but aspires to capture diverse, independent layers of orchestral sounds. His attentiveness to the original texture is thus interdependent with his expansion of pianistic techniques and resources.

As illustrated in Example 3.5b, therefore, Liszt provides solutions for the clarity of voices from the intricate orchestral texture by regarding the primary instruments and performance direction as integral and carefully selecting and deleting some parts of the accompaniment. Most of all, his reworking demonstrates how effectively he uses pianistic idioms in his conscientious effort to transfer complex, disparate layers of orchestral textures as much as possible to his piano score. Behind his virtuosic rendering lies his deep understanding of the original.

### **Transformations of Accompaniment Patterns**

In Berlioz's *Franc-Juges* overture, the march-rhythm theme, as shown in Example 3.5a above, effectively represents the military program of the composition. It reappears throughout in different instrumentation, texture, and character, conveying the composer's skill in transforming the central idea. In his response, Liszt convincingly renders the different guises of the theme by preserving the composer's intent and at the same time revitalizing the accompaniment in virtuosic keyboard idioms.

The martial theme appears first in a quiet and moderate character marked *dolce legato* and *piano*, as shown in Example 3.6a. Liszt's response to the theme, as illustrated in Example 3.6b, is a faithful rendering. The easier version of *ossia plus facile* lends the impression of making it possible to visualize the original score only with his piano score.

Example 3.6a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 119–24

Example 3.6b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 119–24, Liszt arrangement

Liszt delineates the disparate textures typical of Berlioz neatly from top to bottom. The march-rhythm melody in violin I and the pumping basses form a skeleton. Both melody and bass are reinforced in doubled octaves. In the middle register, a syncopated accompaniment in violin II and viola displays its own layer of texture, although the pitch of the viola is omitted (or incorporated into the bass). The frequent use of syncopation is indeed another characteristic of Berlioz's style throughout his overtures. Liszt's faithful approach to the original helps preserve the texture and character, while his rendering in turn requires a

technical challenge to coordinate the syncopated rhythm and leaping basses simultaneously in the left hand.

Once Liszt establishes the martial theme securely on its first appearance, closely adhering to the original, he displays creativity in rendering the theme for his own purposes on its subsequent appearances. In his rendering of the second statement of the martial theme, as already observed in Example 3.5b above, Liszt preserves the previous gentle character of the theme, simultaneously creating an additional visual dimension of playing. For the original accompaniment, he also carefully selects figurations to accommodate the keyboard texture.

The martial theme is far more varied in the recapitulation in the original score. Liszt attentively captures each of Berlioz's characteristic features while taking advantage of each opportunity to offer his own solutions appropriate for the piano. As shown in Example 3.7a, Liszt's version again retains the modest character of the martial theme, while rendering the consistent accompaniment of the pulsing rhythm in the strings and broken chords in the basses into idiomatic and virtuosic keyboard figuration, conveying the interest and intensity of the accompaniment. The theme is incorporated into technically challenging figuration, which requires a thumb-melody and a rapid 2–1 movement against the angular contour of the eighth notes.

Example 3.7a. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 366–70, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 3.7a is presented in two staves. The top staff is for the Flute (Fl.) and the bottom staff is for the Piano (p). The key signature is E-flat major (three flats) and the time signature is 2/4. The Flute part features a melodic line with a long note in the first measure, followed by eighth notes and a final half note. The Piano part features a complex, syncopated accompaniment with eighth notes and broken chords. The piano part includes dynamic markings like 'p' and 'poco f', and fingering numbers are provided for the right hand. The bass line consists of eighth notes and broken chords.

Example 3.7b. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 366–70

The musical score for Example 3.7b, Berlioz's *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, measures 366–70, is presented in a standard orchestral format. The score is in B-flat major and 4/4 time. It features a woodwind section (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Cor I, Bassoon) and a string section (Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass). The woodwinds play a melodic line with various dynamics (p, mf, f) and articulations (poco, espressivo). The strings provide a rhythmic accompaniment with a prominent bassoon line circled in the original image.

Examples 3.8–3.10 further illustrate Liszt's subsequent responses to other guises of the theme with different accompaniments. In Example 3.8a, the prominent accompaniment insists on a single rhythmic profile, which articulates the martial theme in the bassoon, as circled. In Liszt's version of Example 3.8b, he preserves the melodic contour of the bassoon, as circled, yet turning the accompaniment into figuration that requires alternating two-hand motion. The result of his rendering is not only to facilitate the rapid execution of the percussive rhythm but also to convey the effect of the rhythm convincingly on the piano.



Example 3.8a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 507–11

Example 3.8b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 507–11, Liszt arrangement

The percussive rhythm is finally combined with the martial theme in the passage shown in Example 3.9a. The theme is tossed back and forth between clarinet/violin I in mm. 530–31 and oboe/violin II in mm. 532–33, then back to clarinet/violin I in m. 534. As illustrated in Example 3.9b, Liszt made the instrumental exchange clear by his cues. As the original accompaniment becomes denser, Liszt's accompaniment becomes thicker, creating more technical challenges in the midst of rapid percussive rhythm. In both Examples 3.8b and 3.9b, he renders the characteristic accompaniment in his own performance style of two-hand alternation. His creative solution stems from his attempts to keep up the rapidity, interest, and effect of the original.

Example 3.9a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 530–34

Woodwinds: Oboe, Cl. (C), Hn. 1/2, Hn. 3/4, Bsn., Tpt.

Strings: Violin 1, Violin 2, Viola, Cello, D. B.

Dynamic markings: *mf*, *cresc.*, *poco a poco*

Example 3.9b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 530–34, Liszt arrangement

Woodwinds: VI.II, Ob., VI.I, Cl.

Strings: Violin 1, Violin 2

Dynamic markings: *cresc.*, *poco a poco*

In Example 3.10a, the martial theme of the original in the concluding section culminates in a brilliant, heroic character arrived at by a steady orchestral *crescendo*. In

Liszt's rendering of Example 3.10b, the final statement of the triumphant theme is accompanied by wide rolled chords, which heighten the emphatic hammering in the brass instruments and basses. Furthermore, the theme is joined to the extensive angular figuration in the middle register, which expands and transforms the consistent violin writing of the original in his virtuosic pianistic terms.

Example 3.10a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 550–53

550

Fl.

Fl. picc.

Ob.

Cl. (C)

Hn. (E♭)

Hn. (D)

Bsn.

C. Bn.

Trp. (E)

Trp. (E♭)

Tbn.

Tb.

Timp.

Perc.

Vln.

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

*ff*

Example 3.10b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 550–53, Liszt arrangement

To summarize Liszt's renderings of the martial theme throughout Berlioz's *Franc-Juges*, if Berlioz provides the model of the central theme in different guises based on contrasting scoring, texture, and character, Liszt responds to each statement attentively and creatively. He attempts to capture the different character of each occurrence by deploying an appropriate accompaniment pattern in his pianistic terms. His transformation of the accompaniment into his virtuosic keyboard idiom essentially stems from his deep understanding of the original and his conscientious approach to it.

On several occasions Liszt composed new accompaniment patterns. As illustrated in Examples 3.11a and 3.11b, his figurations help the pianist to accomplish the orchestral *crescendo* more effectively, intensify the *tutti* effect, and sustain the tension of the passage.

Example 3.11a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 274–84

Example 3.11b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 274–84, Liszt arrangement

Berlioz's score requires a massive *crescendo* over a short span: first, from *p* through *mf* to *f* in two measures (274–75), followed by another *crescendo* from *f* to *ff* in the two

subsequent measures (276–77). To accomplish this *crescendo* more convincingly, Liszt extensively rewrites the accompaniment patterns. Arpeggiated chords covering the middle and lower registers replace simple pulsing chords for the first *crescendo*, then for the second *crescendo* he transforms the Db–C half-step motion into a stunning 1–4–1–4 movement of the right hand that turns many of the half-steps into major sevenths or minor ninths and spans four octaves. In the second *crescendo* passage, the right-hand figuration is, in fact, based on the alternating pitches Db–C of the strings, which Liszt faithfully preserves in the left hand, along with the sustaining Db of the trombones. Liszt’s rendering thus lends the impression that the string tremolo accompaniment has inspired his own virtuosic figuration, so that the contrasting sides of faithfulness and creativity are interdependent.

The fidelity–creativity dynamic is not confined to the local part of the memorable 1–4–1–4 motion, but expands to the overall passage. Liszt’s transformation of the accompaniment pattern (mm. 274–77) is juxtaposed with a stark chordal passage (mm. 278–79) that reflects his fidelity to the original. The note-for-note chordal passages in turn contrast with the following free scales (mm. 280–81), which are idiomatic pianistic figuration substituted for the *ff* string tremolos and the cymbal crash. What follows from m. 282 is another static passage written from the side of faithfulness.<sup>59</sup> In the constant juxtaposition between free and faithful writing, the dynamic between his creativity and fidelity creates large-scale organization. Moreover, within the free writing, Liszt neither repeats nor continues figuration, but instead constantly and abruptly shifts from one figuration to another. His avoidance of continuity, indeed, serves as one of his compelling solutions to

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<sup>59</sup> In the passage from m. 282, Liszt raises the register of the sustained notes an octave higher in order to create the more ethereal effect of the woodwinds. The seemingly simple texture requires technical demands in which the left hand constantly leaps *pp leggiero*. When the ornamental figures are added to it (from m. 308), the technical demands increase.

sustain the orchestral sonority and keep up the interest of the texture throughout his orchestral arrangements

### Liszt's Rendering of Distinctive Orchestral Effects

#### *Orchestral tremolos*

Examples 3.12a and 3.12b at first glance illustrate the ubiquity of Liszt's rendering of string tremolos in his own pianistic terms, such as the addition of the bravura arpeggiated pattern (mm. 174, 176) and the emulation of string tremolos by chords (mm. 180–81).

Example 3.12a. Berlioz, *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 174–81

The musical score for Example 3.12a, Berlioz's *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, measures 174–81, is presented in a multi-staff format. The woodwind section (Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Cor I & II, Bassoon, Contrabassoon) plays sustained chords. The string section (Violins, Violas, Cellos, Double Basses) plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with tremolos. The piano part features a complex arpeggiated pattern in the right hand and a more rhythmic pattern in the left hand. The score is in 3/4 time and the key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

Example 3.12b. *Les Francs-Juges* Overture, mm. 174–81, Liszt arrangement



Liszt's own virtuosic arpeggios (mm. 174, 176, 178) not only help to sustain the tension of the string tremolos but also reflect his attempts to encompass the wide register of the original orchestral score in the way the pianistic arpeggios reach the highest point of the register of the original. Moreover, these extensive arpeggio patterns are immediately contrasted with the stark and bare octaves in the middle and low register that follow (mm. 175, 177, 179). The dramatic and abrupt juxtaposition between the contrasting styles continues three times, heightening the contrast inherent in the original. In addition, from m. 180, Liszt deploys another pianistic figuration for the string tremolos, in conjunction with his registral exploitation. The figuration moves up an octave and then back down. He also uses triplets in the bass, instead of eighth notes, keeping tension between the tremolos and the bass line. Consequently his reworking helps to sustain and amplify the full *tutti* sonority.

### Liszt's Responses to Certain Programmatic Ideas

On several occasions Liszt's renderings help heighten specific passages of Berlioz's overtures to depict, portray, and represent the characters or moods of the original play. The



sudden change of moods seems to have captured Berlioz's mind in his *Franc-Juges* overture, as Frederick Niecks summarized in a letter that he claimed to come from the composer:

Nothing is terribly frightful as my overture *Les Francs Juges*. . . . It is a hymn to despair, but the most desperate despair, the most desperate despair imaginable, horrible and tender. . . . In short, it is frightful. All that the human heart can contain of rage and tenderness is in the overture.<sup>60</sup>

Abrupt and dramatic changes of dynamics occur frequently throughout the overture, as illustrated in Example 3.13a. In his piano score, Example 3.13b, Liszt reinforces such dramatic contrasts in dynamics through his registral expansion upon the *ff* chords every measure.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Frederick Niecks, *Program Music in the Last Four Centuries* (New York: Haskell House, 1907; reprinted 1969), 243, provides no information about the original source of this quotation; cited in Sandford, "Overtures of Hector Berlioz," 59.

<sup>61</sup> Several notes in each chord lie an octave higher (in the right hand) or lower (in the left) than in Berlioz's score. In addition, the way Liszt transfers the oboes and violas requires the cross-hand technique in execution. The oboes are in parallel thirds and the divided violas play the same thirds in the same register. Thus Liszt's hand-crossing seems entirely invented here, perhaps to emphasize the contrast between the widely-extended chords and the narrow thirds.

Example 3.13a. Berlioz, *Les Franc-Juges* Overture, mm. 46–49

Example 3.13b. *Les Franc-Juges* Overture, mm. 46–49, Liszt arrangement

The contrasting dynamic effects are more pronounced in the *Roi Lear* overture, which exhibits specific programmatic associations with Lear and the two sides of Lear's character. For example, in the introduction of the overture, the memorable recitative alternates between two contrasting groups of *forte* low strings and *pianissimo* upper strings with winds, evoking the dialogue between the king and his daughters or the portrayal of the king as both impulsive and tender.<sup>62</sup> If the dynamic contrast of the recitative depicts the king in his stern opening statement, the oboe melody that begins the second half of the introduction can be interpreted as Cordelia's answer.<sup>63</sup> The memorable recitative of Lear in the introduction is characterized by unstable harmony and unpredictable melodic direction, evoking his disability.<sup>64</sup> The recitative for Lear as a central theme of the overture reappears in permutations throughout, as if portraying the psychological transformation of the character.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to the stern, headstrong character of Lear, Berlioz was also preoccupied with the image of the king's madness. The opening recitative returns in the recapitulation unexpectedly in the subdominant, heralding the madness, as suggested in one of Berlioz's letters in 1831: "I did not intend for his madness to be represented until the middle of the Allegro, when the basses bring in the theme of the introduction in the middle of the storm."<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 48. From a different perspective, Mendl, "Berlioz and Shakespeare, Part I," 99, interprets the introduction as the two sides of Lear's personality; also discussed in Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 49.

<sup>63</sup> Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 49–50, supports this interpretation by using the evidence of Berlioz's particular use of the oboe as an evocation of "tenderness," the text of Cordelia's reply, and the extension of such a contrast to the Allegro section in which the second theme resembles Cordelia's answer in the introduction in melodic construction, scoring, and two-part structure. Prior to Adelson, Tovey, *Essays in Musical Analysis*, 84, also described the introduction as "the tragedy of the speaking basses, of the plea of the oboe, and of the fury of the orchestra."

<sup>64</sup> Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 29.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>66</sup> Hugh MacDonald, *Berlioz, Orchestral Music* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1969), 18; Deborah, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 43, n. 35.

Berlioz specifies the passage associated with the king's "deranged mind" and Liszt's rendering of it: "Whenever this figure appears you use octave triplets. Now, the triplet is quite insufficient to produce the effect of quavers; ternary rhythm is there irreconcilable with the deranged mind that I wish to illustrate."<sup>67</sup> Berlioz's reference to "this figure" above corresponds to the incessant eighth notes of the strings in the passage from m. 561, as illustrated in Example 3.14a.

Example 3.14a. Berlioz, *Le Roi Lear* Overture, mm. 555–70

The image displays a musical score for the strings of Hector Berlioz's *Le Roi Lear* Overture, measures 555–70. The score is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Bass. The second system includes staves for Piano, Violoncello, and Bass. The music is characterized by a driving eighth-note triplet pattern in the strings, marked with 'sempre ff' and 'f'. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The score is written for a full orchestra, with the strings playing a continuous, rhythmic pattern.

<sup>67</sup> Adelson, "Interpreting Berlioz's Overture," 53; cited in Tom S. Wotton, *Hector Berlioz* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935; reprint, New York: Johnson Reprint, 1969), 123; the source of Berlioz's words is not provided. Jacques Barzun, *Berlioz and the Romantic Century* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1969), I, 188, corrects Wotton's error in his translation, *Hector Berlioz*, 123, saying that "the belief that the triplets toward the end represent a 'demented character' rests on a mistranslation of Berlioz's words to Liszt: 'the deranged mind' refers to the 'headlong nature' of the passage; the French word for 'character' in the sense alleged would be 'personage.' This mistake shows at once how Berlioz understood the embodiment of drama, and how easy it is to misinterpret an artist when some fixed idea of his method has taken root."

In his response, Example 3.14b, Liszt transfers the string eighth notes into octave triplets, which, however, Berlioz found “insufficient” to portray the image of the king’s “deranged mind.”

Example 3.14b. *Le Roi Lear* Overture, mm. 555–70, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 3.14b, *Le Roi Lear* Overture, mm. 555–70, Liszt arrangement, is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 555–560) shows a piano part with a tremolando bass line and a grand staff with octave triplets in the right hand. The second system (mm. 561–565) continues the triplet pattern. The third system (mm. 566–570) includes a 'rinforz.' marking and a sextuplet in the grand staff. Dynamics include *fff*, *sf*, and *sempre ff*.

Although Berlioz regarded the “ternary rhythm” that Liszt deployed as incompatible with the portrait of Lear’s madness, Liszt’s choice of the rhythm seems deliberate. Had he transferred the persistent eighth notes of the original literally, it would have become less idiomatic for the piano and created stiffness in the pianist’s wrist. Moreover, his triplets make it possible to gain a desirable speed and intensity appropriate for the deranged mind of the character. His deliberate avoidance of a literal transferral thus shows his artistry through his calculated

figuration and effect, representing his comprehensive knowledge of idiomatic writing for the piano while bringing out the original composer's intent.

## **Conclusion**

The comments by Berlioz and Schumann on Liszt's arrangement, as discussed earlier, address some problems inherent in the transferral from large-scale orchestra to solo piano. Berlioz's comments on Liszt's *Harold Symphony* uncover his view of the arranger's role as fully comprehending the composer's intent and at the same time striving to render it aptly in a new medium, as well as to focus on the individual instruments and their character as faithfully as possible on the piano. Schumann's famous analysis of the *Symphonie fantastique* in 1835, based solely on Liszt's arrangement of the symphony, helps validate the arranger's profound understanding of the original, his "interpretive art" in his transferral, and his comprehensive knowledge of the piano. At the same time, in some places Schumann found it difficult through the limited resource to assess precisely the variegated effects and combinations of the instruments, conveying the limitations intrinsic in transferral to piano.

The remarks of Berlioz and Schumann help set the stage for understanding Liszt's transferral techniques in depth and appreciating his successful solutions. The details of Liszt's "interpretive art" in Schumann's assessment, in particular, are useful for understanding some of the important techniques in Liszt's orchestral arrangements. Schumann first recognizes the details of the instruments in Liszt's notation. As discussed in Chapter 1, Liszt's meticulous notation is not limited to the instrumental cues but extends into equally scrupulous indications in his score. This characteristic is fuller and

more conspicuous in his *partition* of the *Symphonie fantastique* than in his other *partitions*. Example 3.1 of the current chapter has shown how Liszt successfully delineates the stratified registers, differentiated timbres, and sophisticated dynamics simultaneously through his insightful devices of notation, including different stem directions and note size, four layers in the layout, delicate dynamic markings, and distinctive articulation appropriate for each instrument. Behind his meticulous notation lies his assiduous attempt to capture the intricate and delicate nuances of orchestral textures and timbres.

Liszt provides convincing solutions for orchestral complexities, as illustrated in Examples 3.1 and 3.5, noted in Schumann's comment on Liszt's skill in clearly interweaving the individual instruments. In his response to Berlioz's predilection for a multi-layered and polyrhythmic texture (Example 3.5), Liszt deliberately avoids a literal rendering but offers his own pianistic display, yet his pianistic solutions stem from his attempts to clarify the melodic lines, heighten their interactions, and ultimately adhere to the essence of the original.

Schumann also mentions Liszt's treatment of the orchestral texture as a block of sound. Although what the critic precisely had in mind is unclear, an instance of Liszt's exploitation of register may perhaps explain this comment. As in Example 3.2, Liszt effectively uses register to heighten the contrast in orchestral timbres between the woodwinds and strings, creating different blocks of sounds in juxtaposition or alternation. Liszt's registral adjustment shown in Examples 3.2–3.4 is one of his significant techniques, particularly in the *Symphonie fantastique*. The underlying purpose of the technique goes beyond a simple accommodation of a wide orchestral texture, which the

previous views focused on, and sheds light on how Liszt was well aware of the lack of colors on the piano, compensating for it convincingly through pianistic register.

Furthermore, he often turns this limitation into opportunity by creating a startling visual effect, involving jumping, leaping, and crossing hands. The timbral contrast is inherent in the original but its emphasis and reinvigoration is Liszt's own contribution.

Schumann distinguishes Liszt's arrangement with his "interpretive art" from the ubiquitous virtuosic piano pieces of others. The critic implies that Liszt's deep understanding of the original is different from bravura piano techniques that meet the expectations of the shallow public. In some instances Liszt extensively reworks the original, particularly the accompaniment, transforming it into brilliant figurations in his own pianistic terms. Such examples are already found in his Beethoven *partitions* and, by extension, throughout his *partitions*. The excerpts from his rendering of Berlioz's two overtures (Examples 3.6–3.10) have illustrated how attentively he captures the development of the central martial theme of Berlioz's *Francs-Juges*, which appears in a different instrumentation, texture, and character over the course of the music, and how effectively he transforms the accompaniment of each theme in his pianistic terms. In the case of Example 3.12, Liszt judiciously incorporates the bravura arpeggiations to emulate string tremolos and sustain the tension of the sound. Throughout his *partitions*, the impulse behind the ostensibly dazzling display is his aspiration to approximate various orchestral effects such as massive sound or a build-up process, as well as sustain intensity and interest.

Liszt's renderings also reflect his attentive approach to certain programmatic associations, whether Berlioz provided an explicit program, as in his *Symphonie*



*fantastique*, or suggested certain portrayal of characters or moods, as in his *Franc-Juges* and *Roi Lear* overtures. In the case of the latter, as illustrated in Example 3.13, Liszt attempts to heighten the contrast of horror and tenderness in the *Franc-Juges* overture through his effective use of registral and dynamic contrast in abrupt juxtaposition. Liszt's deliberate use of triplets, as shown in Example 3.14, in contrast with a literal rendering of consistent eighth notes, illustrates his calculated way of heightening Berlioz's preoccupation with the unstable psychological state of King Lear.

To conclude Liszt's *partitions* of "sacred texts," the groups of Beethoven and Berlioz arrangements, these *partitions* represent the pinnacle of the arranger's fidelity to the original. This is evident in Liszt's meticulous notation, as discussed in Chapter 1, and the contemporary assessment of Liszt's renderings as well as the detailed investigations of his transferral and reworking techniques in Chapters 2 and 3. At the same time, the musical analyses demonstrate that Liszt's faithfulness is not necessarily associated with a literal rendering of the original but invites his own solutions appropriate to a new medium. Fidelity on the surface and creativity underneath thus coexist in his reworking. Conversely, his extensive reworking on the surface, which appears contradictory to his overall faithfulness, stems from his attentive approach to the original textures and instruments. The following two chapters, 4 and 5, continue the fidelity–creativity dynamic in the remaining *partitions*, which are, however, distinguishable from those of "sacred texts" with respect to Liszt's unique approach in each case.

## Chapter 4

### **Reassessing the *Partition* 1: Rossini's *Guillaume Tell Overture***

Following on his *partitions* of Berlioz and Beethoven's orchestral compositions, Liszt's arrangement of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell Overture* (1838) shares with those *partitions* the transferral and reworking process, as well as his pianistic solutions. Against the backdrop of several common features, Liszt's reworking in his *partition* of Rossini's overture also exhibits some characteristics that distinguish it from the others. First, the original texture of a cantabile melody with light orchestration is transformed into a fuller, thicker, and richer sound in Liszt's pianistic process of increasingly enriching texture. Second, Rossini's distinctive use of solo instruments would have challenged Liszt in transferring the timbres and colors of individual instruments, as already encountered in his previous *partitions*. Yet the limitations provided an opportunity for Liszt to turn them into his own opulent and sonorous version, full of pianistic resources, as will be illustrated in his treatment of the timpani's prominent trills. Third, Liszt incorporates improvisatory-like passages more frequently than in any other *partition*, presumably responding to the performance tradition of improvisation in arias. The accounts of Liszt's performances of this *partition*, although modest, can illuminate the purposes of the reworking. Resuming the study of musical examples, this chapter will focus on the three main features of Liszt's reworking mentioned above. The examples ultimately demonstrate his distinctive approach to this *partition* while he continued to use his transferral techniques associated with the concept of *partition*.

Before discussing specific examples, it is worth noting a change in Liszt's use of the designations of instruments in the arrangement of Rossini's overture. Detailed cues of instruments, along with the performing markings, were abundant in the previous *partitions*, but drastically reduced in the Liszt–Rossini *partition*. Liszt seems to carefully select only a few solo instruments or instrumental groups that play a significant role in the original overture: the five cellos and timpani in the opening Andante (5Vc., Timp.), the woodwinds punctuating the “storm” section (Fl., Ob., Cl., or Fati, indicating woodwind instruments), the pastoral scene of the English horn and flute (C. ing., Fl.), and the famous introductory fanfare of the Trombone (Tr.) both in the final galop as well as the demanding horn that joins later (Cor., Tr.).<sup>1</sup> It is not surprising that Liszt emphasized the solo instruments by the specific cues. He did this previously to overcome the limitation of transferring instrumental color and inform the reader or performer of the details of the instruments, as already observed in the earlier *partitions* of orchestral music by Beethoven and Berlioz. Yet as many cues are used in the entire arrangement of Rossini's overture as appear on one page or less in the arrangements of Berlioz or Beethoven symphonies or overtures. Thus, the density and richness of the designations—for both solo instruments and the remaining parts—in the former *partitions* give way to a select few in the Liszt–Rossini *partition*. This notational difference seems to be minor in Liszt's reworking, but it may suggest that Liszt's approach to the Rossini overture stems

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<sup>1</sup> Rossini's mastery of orchestration in the overture and throughout the opera *Guillaume Tell* is associated with a distinctive use of the solo instruments, including divisi cellos, an extensive English horn solo, rapid trombone passages, and demanding horn parts. For a detailed discussion of Rossini's individual instruments throughout the opera, see William Edward Runyan, “Orchestration in Five French Grand Operas” (PhD diss., University of Rochester, 1983), 87. In the final galop of Liszt's version, the designations of both the horn and the trombone also appear when they enter as a thematic group against the contrasting material in the first episode of the rondo at m. 275.

less from his attempts to arrange the original in the most meticulous detail, as he had done before, than from his attempts to focus on the most essential features of the original. For this reason, his transferring process is no longer applied to every detail of the original but leads towards a more concentrated version in keeping with his own interpretation of the distinctive features, as will be further discussed in the examples below.

### **Liszt's Opulent Version of Rossini's *Ranz des vaches***

Rossini's *Guillaume Tell Overture* consists of four sections: (1) The Prelude, Andante, E major; (2) The Storm, Allegro, E minor; (3) The *Ranz des vaches* ("Call to the Dairy Cows," a herdsman's song), the melancholy call of the Swiss cowherd, Andante, G major; and (4) The Finale, Allegro, E major.<sup>2</sup> The third section (*Ranz des vaches*) is an especially memorable pastoral scene, in which Rossini imbues the nostalgic tune with English horn solos and adds the brighter sound of the flute and triangle.<sup>3</sup> The first phrase of the melody in the English horn is illustrated in Example 4.1a.

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<sup>2</sup> Richard Osborn, "Guillaume Tell," in *Rossini: His Life and Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 316–24, at 317.

<sup>3</sup> The English horn's distinctive passage appears only once in its entirety in the overture. The virtuosic nature of the flute is confined to the overture, showing Rossini's creative writing but at the same time his conservative attitude toward the instrument. Runyan, "Orchestration," 86–87, 90. For the triangle tone, it can evoke another image of the pastoral such as the "bells of the mountain sheep." Osborn, "Guillaume Tell," 317.

Example 4.1a. Rossini, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, opening of *Ranz des vaches*, mm. 176–80

In the original, Rossini’s economy of orchestration helps highlight the melancholic tune of the English horn and its pastoral image with the solo instrument’s own color and timbre. Liszt’s version is given in Example 4.1b; although the piano cannot emulate the English horn completely, he indicates the original instrument clearly with the cue of “C. ing.”

Example 4.1b. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, opening of *Ranz des vaches*, mm. 176–80, Liszt arrangement

In addition, Liszt converts the accompaniment to a more sonorous pianistic texture with wide-spread rolled chords, as if already suggesting a more opulent version of Rossini's original. On a deeper level, the *pizzicatos* are rendered by low octaves and arpeggios, and the sustained chords in the horns and bassoons are represented by chords in the mid-range of the piano. The chords are rearticulated each measure to show the *pizzicato* sounds in the strings. Liszt thus closely approached the details of the two contrasting groups of instruments with a different articulation of each in the accompaniment.

The absence of a pedal indication seems contradictory to the rendition of the opulent rolled chords, which usually require the sustaining pedal. According to Kenneth Hamilton's study, during the period of the *Grandes études*, S. 137 (1837–39), at least, Liszt's practice was inconsistent, in a range from complete absence or paucity of indication to many detailed markings. Liszt tended to prescribe the sustaining pedal "only when the pedaling was not immediately obvious, or in order to underline a dramatic increase in volume."<sup>4</sup> Yet, Example 4.1b is not a case of it being "immediately obvious" that the sustaining pedal is needed to render the sonorous accompaniment, implied despite the lack of pedal marking. Pedal is not required if we consider Liszt's sensitive approach to the accompaniment and its *effective* rendering in performance. The lack of pedal is an expression of the *pizzicato*. It is simply not possible to evoke the *pizzicatos* if the pianist uses the pedal. Thus the absence of pedal is a judicious choice that Liszt made to be faithful to the details of the original in a more nuanced manner.

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<sup>4</sup> Hamilton, "Performing Liszt's Piano Music," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, 186; see his discussion of Liszt's pedaling in the chapter, 185–88.

When the *Ranz des vaches* tune repeats, Liszt changes the texture of each appearance over the course of his arrangement. What if Liszt had been consistent with the texture of Ex. 4.1b throughout the section, just as Rossini had? In other words, what if he had arranged the spare Rossinian orchestral writing literally into a pianistic texture consisting of a melody with light accompaniment throughout, as in the opening phrase of the pastoral tune? If he had done so, his score would have become a simple reproduction of the orchestral score playable by amateur pianists and more suitable for domestic marketing. Liszt already criticized such “literal” and “superficial” piano arrangements, to which the majority of his contemporaneous piano arrangements belonged and from which he attempted to distinguish his own arrangements (see Chapter 1). Such a desire provided another opportunity for Liszt to exploit the rich resources of the keyboard by turning the Rossinian economy of orchestration into his opulence of sonority and texture in pianistic terms. A series of examples below illustrate how his process of enriching sonority and texture unfolds gradually over the course of the section.

As the melancholic *Ranz des vaches* reiterates and develops, Liszt’s score also becomes increasingly denser, thicker, and fuller. When the nostalgic English horn is combined with the flute and triangle, the original texture is transformed into the virtuosic brand of three-hand texture and technique in Liszt’s score, as illustrated in Examples 4.2a and 4.2b.

Example 4.2a. Rossini, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 209–10

209

Fl.

E. Hn.

Bsn.

Hn. (G)

Trgl.

Vn.

Va.

Vc. Db.

*dolce*

3

3

3

Example 4.2b. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 209–10, Liszt arrangement

209

Fl.

*cantando espressione*

3

3

3

In Liszt's version, the enriched melody in double octaves is surrounded by independent *staccato* articulation of the flute and the *pizzicato* string chords in the basses. Liszt's reworking not only lends a deeper and richer sound to the original but also evokes the



image of three hands moving simultaneously, contributing to both the acoustic and visual expansion.<sup>5</sup>

The virtuosic three-hand texture leads to a thickened texture in both hands at m. 219 of Example 4.3a, reaching its peak of density and opulence at the conclusion of the section (last system of Example 4.3a).

Example 4.3a. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 217–25, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 4.3a, measures 217–25 of the *Guillaume Tell* Overture, Liszt arrangement, is presented in five systems. The first system (mm. 217–218) shows a dense texture with multiple voices. The second system (mm. 219–220) includes an 'Ossia' section with a different texture. The third system (mm. 221–222) shows a return to a dense texture. The fourth system (mm. 223–224) shows a final dense texture. The fifth system (mm. 225–226) shows a final dense texture. The score is written in G major and 2/4 time.

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<sup>5</sup> Liszt's rendering brings up the question of how the pianist can actually perform the passage, including which hand plays what and how to play a *staccato* G on the top of a sustained G. One possibility is that the left hand arpeggiates the lower *staccato* notes, then jumps to the flute part until the middle tune is in the bottom staff. Another possibility is that the left hand takes over the sustained notes for the right hand.

Example 4.3a. (*Continued*)

Example 4.3a. (*Continued*)

224

225

Example 4.3b. Rossini, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 217–25

217

Fl.

E. Hn.

Cl.

Bsn.

Hn. (G)

Trgl.

Vn.

Va.

Vc. Db.

Example 4.3b (*Continued*)

In Example 4.3a, several points should be noted: where Liszt transfers the tune of the *Ranz des vaches* in a more literal manner, where he reworks it in an enriched pianistic sonority and texture, and how he combines it with completely new material, and most of all, how they are all interact with one other. A comparison of Examples 4.3a and 4.3b demonstrates that Liszt's *ossia* provides a faithful rendering as opposed to his increasingly accumulating process of texture and sonority underneath. The more literal renderings in mm. 218 and 220 alternate and are juxtaposed with the freer side of the reworking in mm. 219 and 221–22. The faithful rendering in mm. 218 and 220, in the midst of the increasing thickened texture, provides a guidepost for listeners following the original composition. Yet Liszt's virtuosic rendering in m. 219 and from m. 221 on intrudes on the original tune, keeping up interest in the repeating pastoral tune and finally culminating in its amplified sonority and effect in mm. 223–25.

The sonorous trill figures of mm. 221–22 in Example 4.3a particularly call our attention, because they are completely original material by Liszt. The new figures are constructed on Rossini's harmonic background, but they contribute an additional layer of sonorous music, in keeping with Liszt's interest in creating his own opulent version. When the figures reiterate in a higher register in m. 222, the range is expanded further to a higher register of the keyboard. The trill figures do not hinder the clarity of the original melody, yet make the passage sound fresh. Moreover, the trills give the impression that, to sustain the interest, Liszt did not want to repeat what he had done before; it is as if he were improvising based on the repeating pattern of the original melody, which he had probably done frequently in his compositional process.<sup>6</sup> Finally, although the single-line melody is consistent throughout Rossini's pastoral scene, Liszt transforms it into thick chords. Ultimately the heaviest chordal passages arise in both hands at m. 225, together with a slight change of melodic contour.

One may point out that Liszt's enriching process in his *partition* of Rossini's overture is ubiquitous throughout his *partitions* and therefore not really distinctive for this *partition*. But his reworking here transforms the character of the simple Rossinian pastoral scene into Lisztian virtuosic language. The impulse behind this change may stem from the difficulty in rendering the pastoral mood, image, and sound of the original properly in his piano score. The difficulty, however, motivated a completely different track, one that makes his version individual. In addition, the change in the original character is not confined to a moment but proceeds over the course of the section.

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<sup>6</sup> David Trippett, "Après une Lecture de Liszt: Virtuosity and *Werktreue* in the 'Dante' Sonata," *19th-Century Music* 32, no. 1 (Summer 2008): 52–93. Trippett's study of Liszt's compositional process of his Dante sonata elucidates the claim that Liszt's improvisatory practice and compositional practice are not separable but interact with each other. Trippett's study will be discussed further later in this chapter.

Throughout his renderings of Examples 4.1–4.3, therefore, it is worth underscoring that Liszt signifies Rossini’s authorial presence through the pastoral tune and the instrumental cue of the English horn; without these elements, the pastoral section of this *partition* could be mistaken for Liszt’s own composition for solo piano.

Strikingly, Liszt’s reworking of Rossini’s *Ranz des vaches* reminds us of those found in his song arrangements written in the same year of 1838, particularly those of Schubert’s *12 Lieder*. Rossini’s *Ranz des vaches* indeed implies a song-like texture in its prominent solo melody and the light accompaniment. Liszt could have conceived of it as another song texture, as he had dealt with Schubert song arrangements around the same time. For example, Liszt’s arrangement of Schubert’s “Ave Maria” exhibits how he turns the strophic song into his own virtuosic piano version using a similar process of gradually increasing enrichment to his section of Rossini’s *Ranz des vaches*. As illustrated in Examples 4.4a and 4.4b, Schubert’s accompaniment provides the initial inspiration for Liszt’s first strophe. Yet in Liszt’s version it is doubled in both hands to thicken the texture from the beginning, while the melody is lowered an octave to facilitate the thumb-melody in the three- or four-hand texture.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The reading of the melody as lowered an octave assumes that a woman originally sang it. Liszt’s version puts it in the right range for a man to sing.

Example 4.4a. Schubert, “Ave Maria,” beginning of first strophe



Example 4.4b. “Ave Maria,” beginning of first strophe, Liszt arrangement

The image shows the beginning of Liszt's arrangement of 'Ave Maria'. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a half note 'A' on a whole note, followed by a half note 've' on a whole note, and then a half note 'Ma' on a whole note, and finally a half note 'ri' on a whole note, and a half note 'a!' on a whole note. The piano accompaniment is more complex than Schubert's, featuring a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a steady eighth-note pattern in the left hand, both in a minor key. The score includes various musical markings such as 'molto', 'gli accompagnamenti sempre dolciss.', 'il canto sempre marcato ed espressivo', 'pp', and 'smorz.'. The score also includes a list of names: Leo, Leo, Leo, Leo, Leo, and Leo.

Whereas Schubert’s setting of the second and third strophes proceeds in an almost identical manner to the first one, Liszt develops the strophic song into a virtuosic piano version by enriching the texture and sonority, adding virtuosic accompaniment patterns, and thus ultimately increasing the opulence and bravura, as illustrated in Examples 4.4c and 4.4d.

Example 4.4c. “Ave Maria,” beginning of second strophe, Liszt arrangement

17 *dolciss. delicatamente* *8va*

*il canto sempre marcato ed espressivo*

*A - ve Ma - ri*

*gli accompagnamenti sempre p e staccato*

Example 4.4d. “Ave Maria,” beginning of third strophe, Liszt arrangement

*pp leggieriss.* *8va*

*A - ve Ma - ri*

*dolce*

*pp leggieriss.*

The similar reworking process shared between these two arrangements also corresponds to a similar performance context. Liszt’s arrangement of Rossini’s *Guillaume Tell* Overture, along with his song arrangements of “Ave Maria” as well as “Erlkönig” and “Ständchen von Shakespeare” (all coming from the *12 Lieder*), were the most frequently performed arrangements in Liszt’s public concerts during his virtuoso years, especially during his years in Germany, 1840–45 and in England in the early 1840s.<sup>8</sup> This

<sup>8</sup> According to Saffle, the three song arrangements and Rossini *partition* all belong to the seventeen pieces that were most frequently performed in Liszt’s concerts in Germany, 1840–45. During those years, Liszt performed the “Erlkönig” arrangement more than 65 times, the “Ständchen” more than

performance context of the Liszt–Rossini *partition* helps explain the purpose of such an opulent, sonorous, and virtuosic approach to the *partition*. As will be further discussed below, this *partition* was primarily intended to amaze his audience and exhibit both his virtuosic compositional and performing ability. For example, Liszt’s rendering of the *Ranz des vaches* at one of his London concerts on 31 October 1840 captured the attention of Carl Reinecke:

His [Liszt’s] marvelous, unsurpassed bravura and virtuosity were always blended with poetic feeling and the keenest musical intelligence. . . . If, however, it came into his head to dazzle the ignorant throng a little, he would allow himself to be carried away by all manner of fantastic tricks, at which even I, a mere boy, had to shake my head. I remember, for instance, my astonishment when in his otherwise wonderful rendering of the Overture to *William Tell* he hammered out the *Ranz des vaches* with the side of his right index finger!<sup>9</sup>

We can also understand the correspondence between Liszt’s *Ranz des vaches* and his arrangements of Schubert’s songs through the issue of the position of this particular *partition* in Liszt’s recital programs. Liszt’s arrangements of Schubert’s songs in general have been appreciated in their own right and regarded as an independent genre by scholars, mainly because of his complete transformation of the song into a virtuosic piano score.<sup>10</sup> Although Liszt’s arrangement of Rossini’s overture still belongs to the realm of *partition*, as it transferred the original in an overall faithful manner, his treatment of

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30 times, the “Ave Maria” almost 30 times, and the *partition* of Rossini’s *Guillaume Tell Overture*, almost 40 times. Saffle, Table 2: Liszt’s Primary German Repertory, in *Liszt in Germany, 1840–1845*, 187. The *partition* was also one of the stock pieces in Liszt’s London concert season during the early 1840s; Williams, *Portrait*, 135, 142, 152, 153, and 161.

<sup>9</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 145; a slightly different translation in Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 110; the original from Reinecke, “Erinnerungen an Franz Liszt,” *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 78 (1911): 570. Reinecke was a young pianist and later became a composer, teacher, writer, and conductor of the Leipzig Gewandhaus concerts.

<sup>10</sup> Kregor, “Compositional Fantasies,” in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 75–111, provides many instances of Liszt’s re-reading of the original songs. Liszt’s reworking as observed in the example of his “Ave Maria” represents only one facet of his various transformations.



Rossini's pastoral scene in an individual way allows us to regard it as differing from other *partitions* and arrangements. Liszt's version of the *Ranz des vaches* is only part of the entire overture and is much shorter than his versions of Schubert's songs, and thus one may be hesitant to treat it as "independent." Yet the relationship between this part of the *partition* and the song arrangements, with respect to the compositional date, the reworking process, and the performing context, can bolster the claim that Liszt's *partition* of Rossini's overture challenges the boundary between fidelity to the original and liberation from it, and does so in a more pronounced manner than in his other *partitions*.

### **Liszt's Reinterpretation of the Timpani's Role**

In the opening Andante of Rossini's score, the lyrical melody in cello I is interrupted by the distinctive sound of the timpani, as shown in Example 4.5a. The timpani's role in both Rossini and Liszt's version immediately calls our attention because of its salient features, not only sonically but also structurally.

Example 4.5a. Rossini, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 17–23

Example 4.5a shows the original orchestration by Rossini. The timpani part is marked *pp* (pianissimo) and features a soft roll. The strings play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The piano part has a pizzicato line. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

Example 4.5b. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 17–23, Liszt arrangement

Example 4.5b shows Liszt's arrangement. The piano part is marked *cantando espressivo* and features a melodic line with slurs and ties. The timpani part is marked *m.d.* (moderato) and features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

In Liszt's version of Example 4.5b, the soft timpani rolls are completely transformed into pianistic figuration (mm. 22–23). The way Liszt renders the timpani's roll is intriguing: he initially emulates the rolls in a literal sense, as a conventional trill, which then turns

into a more chromatic, dramatic, and rumbling bass line: the agitation of the timpani. Liszt's rendering of the timpani thus lends an impression of the process of his extemporizing, which in turn is realized in his written-out composition: the impression of "gradually composing out an improvisation."<sup>11</sup>

More importantly, a detailed look at Liszt's rendering indicates how faithfully he approaches the timpani rolls. In Rossini's score, the bass on A# underneath the roll in m. 22 serves as an important structural pitch, which leads to B of a cadence on V of E major in m. 24. In Liszt's response, his rendering of the chromatic scales is ostensibly new material, yet it makes the bass A# literally the lowest note and also preserves the register of the bass. His chromatic scales thus rely on the implied bass, anchor constantly on the bass, and move in the original range of the double basses. The scales also echo the E–A# motion in mm. 21–22 in the bass, as marked in brackets. His reworking thus reveals both his close attention to the integrity of the timpani's rolls and his artistry in extending them into his pianistic version.

The timpani also play an important role as a structural element in Rossini's score. Prior to the timpani's appearance, the expressive melody unfolds in a four-measure antecedent phrase (mm. 17–20), followed by what we would expect to be a four-measure consequent phrase; this, however, thwarts our expectation by ceasing in the middle of the phrase with a questioning gesture. The timpani abruptly intrudes on what has already

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<sup>11</sup> Trippett, "Après une Lecture de Liszt," 82; at 55, Trippett points out that Liszt is composing out of his improvisatory practice, through which a certain number of his musical ideas came to him (rather than prior to the improvisation), and thus his compositional process represents his softening of "the distinction between the physical/tactile and the mental/imagination in music." Trippett also relates Liszt's practice to what Arnold Schoenberg called "slowed-down improvisation." Schoenberg famously expressed this opinion in "Brahms the Progressive": "Composition is a kind of slowed down improvisation; often one cannot write fast enough to keep pace with the torrent of ideas," in *Style and Idea*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black, a new foreword by Joseph Auner (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010; originally published 1975), 439.

happened and attempts to fill in what is left questioning. The enigmatic use of the timpani's rolls in Rossini's version is highlighted by Liszt's colorful pianistic figuration, which would have made an indelible impression on the audience of the time. Liszt takes the salient feature of the timpani's role both sonorously and structurally, yet at the same time dramatizes it for his own purpose.<sup>12</sup>

Liszt returns to the memorable figuration of the timpani rolls towards the end of the second section, Allegro, as illustrated in Example 4.6a.

Example 4.6a. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 163–71, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 4.6a, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 163–71, Liszt arrangement, is presented in three systems. The first system (mm. 163–171) shows the piano part with a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes, and the timpani part with a series of rolls. The piano part is marked with '8va' and 'trem.' (tremolando). The timpani part is marked with 'Timp.' and '8va'. The score is divided into three systems, each with a measure number (163, 166, 169) and a measure count (19, 25, 19).

<sup>12</sup> When the timpani's rolls return in mm. 39–41, intruding on and merging into the oboe's trills, Liszt's emphasis on the main thematic line leads him to continue the oboe's trills while eliminating the timpani roll at m. 39 but bringing it back in the typical *tremolando* bass at m. 40.

Example 4.6b. Rossini, *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 163–71

The musical score for Example 4.6b shows the orchestration for measures 163-171 of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* Overture. The flute has a solo part starting at measure 163. The woodwinds (Clarinets, Bassoons, Cor Anglais, Trombones) play a sustained, low melody in measure 164, marked *pp*. The timpani plays a continuous roll. The strings (Violins, Violas, Cellos, Double Basses) play a tremolo pattern, marked *pizz.* in measures 164-165 and *Unis.* in measure 166. The score ends at measure 171.

As shown in Example 4.6b, the texture of Rossini's score is sparse. The solo flute figures evoke distant lightning, while the timpani rolls and string tremolos fill in the empty space, sustaining the intensity and portraying the storm in the distance. In Liszt's version of Example 4.6a, the flat trill renders the empty space of the timpani alone, whereas the chromatic scales, articulated by *crescendo* and *decrescendo*, portray the timpani when it sounds under the string tremolos, aptly evoking the storm. Liszt's alternation between conventional trills and chromatic figuration thus coincides with the absence and presence of the string tremolos rendered by the right hand of the piano score. Behind his use of the chromatic scales lie his attempts to compensate for the lack of instrumental timbres and sustaining capability of the piano for the timpani rolls and string tremolos.

A striking dynamic change highlights the chromatic passage in Liszt's version, shifting from the original *pp* tremolos to a more dramatic *crescendo* and *decrescendo*.

The rise and fall of those scales suggest *crescendo* and *decrescendo* of the timpani, and thus the effect is more timpani-like. Such a dynamic change and its resultant effect add to the significance of Liszt's own version of the timpani. Also, the dynamic alteration is not a regular feature of his reworking throughout his *partitions*, and thus reflects his careful attention to the individual instrument and its effect.<sup>13</sup>

As heard earlier in the composition, the identification of the timpani with particular chromatic figuration is distinctive without necessarily using the instrumental cue of the timpani at m. 163. The timpani cue in Liszt's version indeed appears later than we might expect. Whereas the timpani's rolls in the orchestral score were already initiated in m. 127 on the pitch E, continued on the pitch B in m. 131, and extended on to m. 171, Liszt does not faithfully render the full 45 measures of extended timpani rolls in mm. 127–62; the rolls are completely eliminated for the sake of more important thematic material or incorporated into the string tremolos.

But why, then, did Liszt pay special attention to the timpani from m. 163 toward the end of the Allegro? Perhaps he found the memorable figuration of the timpani an effective culmination for the lengthy accumulated rolls for the conclusion of the section. Or perhaps it provided a solution for substituting for the interest of such extended rolls against the sparse texture underlying the flute figures and string tremolos. Or perhaps the pianistic version of the timpani's rolls immediately transported his audience back to their first appearance, already etched in their memories, because of the same figuration and the audibly clear A# in the bass. By harkening back to the past, the present moment of the

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<sup>13</sup> One of the noticeable instances associated with Liszt's dynamic changes occurs in the first movement of Liszt–Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*: the passage at m. 50 where Liszt creates his own contrast of dynamics between *ppp* for violin I and *mf* for horn I, which is originally between *ppp* and *p*, in order to accentuate the thematic line of the horn.

timpani's rolls can trigger the sensation of memory. In Rossini's original, the timpani's rolls initially act as a poignant disruption to the regular phrasing structure and are then relegated into the background; in Liszt's version, he makes it a recurring element to create an additional impression on the audience.

### Liszt's Passages Evoking an Improvisatory Quality

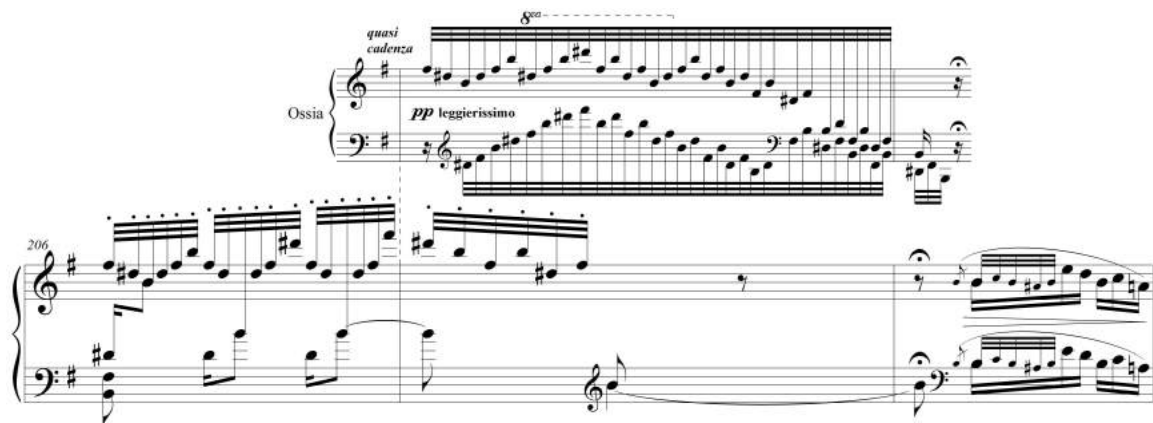
Liszt offered more free and fantasy-like passages in his *partition* of Rossini's overture than in any other *partitions*. For example, as observed above, the timpani rolls were perhaps derived from his improvisatory practice in which a standard tremolo changes into other figuration. The improvisatory-like passages, as illustrated in Examples 4.7a–d below, make the Liszt–Rossini *Guillaume Tell* align more with the composer's realm of fantasy through cadenzas and embellishments.

Liszt explicitly suggested two improvisatory passages designated as “quasi cadenza” in his *ossia*, as in Example 4.7a.

Example 4.7a. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, ossia “quasi cadenza,” mm. 201 and 206–8, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for Example 4.7a is presented in two systems. The first system, labeled 'quasi cadenza' and 'Ossia', shows a piano part with a tremolo in the right hand and a single note in the left hand, and a violin part with a tremolo. The second system, labeled '201', shows the piano part with a tremolo in the right hand and a single note in the left hand, and the violin part with a tremolo. The score is in G major and 2/4 time.

Example 4.7a. (Continued)



The improvisatory-like scale with the marking *delicatamente* is also incorporated into the penultimate measure of the phrase in Example 4.7b.

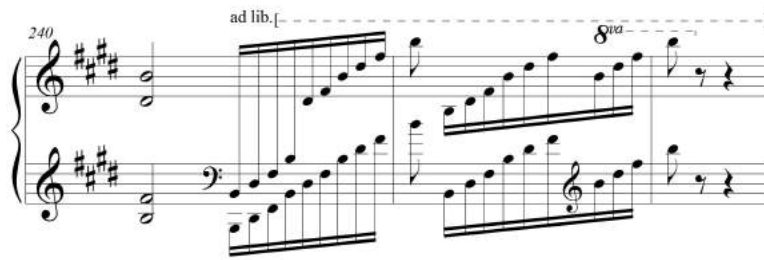
Example 4.7b. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 193–94, Liszt arrangement



An *ad libitum* passage concludes the characteristic fanfare-motive of the introduction to the Finale, suspending the moment for the following galop, shown in Example 4.7c:



Example 4.7c. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, *ad libitum* passage, mm. 240–42, Liszt arrangement



The extended chromatic scale toward the conclusion of the entire piece makes an indelible impression against the backdrop of the marching rhythmic pattern of the Finale, as shown in Example. 4.7d.

Example 4.7d. *Guillaume Tell* Overture, mm. 455–60, Liszt arrangement

The chromatic scale up to the middle of the passage, as marked in brackets, belongs to Rossini. Yet its extension to the extreme is Liszt's. Rossini's scale served as a source of

inspiration for Liszt to extemporize and recompose it, suspending the moment (see the change to 4/4 meter from the original 2/4 meter) and thus making his rendering unique.

The improvisatory-like passages, as observed in the series of examples above, are more noticeable and prominent in the Liszt–Rossini *partition* than in his other *partitions*, in which they appear sporadically in only a few instances: almost none throughout the set of Beethoven symphonies but a few in the Liszt–Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique* and Liszt–Weber overtures.<sup>14</sup> Such designations as “quasi-cadenza” and “ad-lib”—which are directly associated with a fantasy-like quality—are completely absent from other *partitions*. The improvisatory-like passages make the *partition* of the Liszt–Rossini *Guillaume Tell* distinctive. And yet in Liszt’s categorization it remained a *partition*, not a fantasy. It follows the original structure closely, with no extensions or deletions, and in other respects is like the *partitions*, as explained in the conclusion below.

### Performance Accounts

Liszt’s *partitions* in general all served as staples of his performances. As discussed earlier, his arrangements of the second and fourth movements of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* as well as the “Storm” movement of Beethoven’s Sixth Symphony were highly acclaimed by the critics and audiences of the time. And although the *partitions* of Weber’s overtures were written toward the end of his virtuoso years, they also continued

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<sup>14</sup> The instances include the first movement of the *Symphonie fantastique*, mm. 61–62 in place of string tremolos; and the fifth movement, the *ossia* of mm. 429–33, designated as “*glissando*,” which has a brilliant series of sixths. In the Liszt–Weber *Freischütz*, the *ossia* passages of mm. 30–33 and 257–60 (which will be discussed in the following chapter) as well as in the Liszt–Weber *Oberon*, the extended scale m. 112 (but only a one-octave expansion), and the *ossia* of m. 163.

to be performed.<sup>15</sup> The frequency of performance of the Liszt-Rossini *partition*, however, remarkably outweighs that of the other *partitions*: almost forty times for the former in a sharp contrast with the four public performances of the excerpts from the Liszt-Berlioz *Symphonie fantastique*.<sup>16</sup> The stunning performing record of the Liszt-Rossini *partition* indicates its sensational audience reception. The popularity of Liszt's *Guillaume Tell* stems originally from Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* itself, which was a great success from its premiere on 3 August 1829 and remained in the opera repertory throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>17</sup> The Italian preoccupation with opera and Liszt's response to the demands of the Italian audience all led him to use his arrangement of the *Guillaume Tell* overture to begin his concert in Rome in 1839.<sup>18</sup>

Liszt's performances of the *partition* of Rossini's overture captured the ears and eyes of the audience of the time, just as the previous *partitions* had done. Moritz Saphir, a representative Viennese critic as an editor of *Der Humorist* and admirer of Liszt's playing, accounts for how successfully Liszt's arrangement and its performance

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<sup>15</sup> The Liszt-Weber overtures will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

<sup>16</sup> The record of almost forty performances is based on Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 187. For other performance records of the Liszt-Rossini overtures, see those cited in nn. 6 and 7 above. For the Liszt-Beethoven symphonies, I included a number of performance accounts in Chapter 2; for the Liszt-Weber overtures, see Chapter 5.

<sup>17</sup> The premier of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* took place in front of a vast audience and received ecstatic responses by the press. See Benjamin Walton, *Rossini in Restoration Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 257; also for a more detailed chronology, see "Notizie storiche," in Gioachino Rossini, *Guillaume Tell*, ed. M. Elizabeth C. Bartlett, vol. 39 of the Critical Edition, 4 vols. (Pesaro: Fondazione Rossini, 1992), I, xxi-liv. After the premiere, the opera had to suffer drastic cuts and finally appeared to the public in the form of Act II alone. Despite that, the opera had received 648 performances by the end of 1880. Runyan, "Orchestration," 85; for the general information of the popularity of the opera, also see Cormac Newark, "Guillaume Tell," in *The Cambridge Companion to Rossini*, ed. Emanuele Senici (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 175-88, at 175.

<sup>18</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 110; Hamilton, "Creating the Solo Recital," in *After the Golden Age*, 41-42, discusses the concert of 1839, called "musical soliloquies," which comprise entirely Liszt's own compositions and arrangements. The musical soliloquies pave the way to the virtuoso's first "recital" on 9 June 1840 in the Hanover Square Rooms in London.

conveyed the orchestral sounds on the piano in one of his Viennese concerts of 1838.<sup>19</sup> Liszt's *partition* of *Guillaume Tell* Overture was one of his stock pieces in his London concerts of the 1840s.<sup>20</sup> It was greeted with enthusiastic applause and calls for an encore, as reported by the *Halifax Guardian* about one of the London concerts in 1841:

The Overture to *Guillaume Tell* was rapturously encored; upon which M. Liszt substituted some splendid variations upon the National Anthem. The company were electrified with their majestic grandeur.<sup>21</sup>

London audiences and critics were amazed at the unparalleled power that Liszt “accomplished with ten fingers,” as *The Times* reported on 2 July 1840:

The next piece was the overture to *William Tell*, which brought all the performer's power at once into action. . . . Liszt with exquisite taste and tact confined his additions to the harmonies; and though this composition is probably one of the fullest scores that Rossini ever wrote, yet the most complete orchestra by which we have ever heard it performed never produced a more powerful effect, and certainly was very far behind Liszt in spirit and unity of execution. How all this is accomplished with ten fingers we confess ourselves unable to guess; and even could description convey any idea of Liszt's performance, its possibility would still appear incredible, except to those who heard it.<sup>22</sup>

In this report, it is worth underscoring that the writer praises Liszt's faithfulness, not the excessiveness that was more customary in descriptions of the performing style of the time, noting his “exquisite taste and tact confined his additions to the harmonies.” By “the harmonies” we assume that the writer means the accompanimental figurations, not the chords. The point here is that the melodies are neither changed nor “paraphrased.” Although the writer's focus is more on Liszt's performance conjuring up the orchestra on the keyboard, he grasped Liszt's adherence to the original structure, suggesting how

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<sup>19</sup> *Der Humorist* 2, no. 85 (28 May 1838); cited in Gibbs, “Liszt's 1838 Vienna Concerts,” 201.

<sup>20</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, provides ample anecdotes of the reception in this city (pp. 138, 141, 152–53, 155, 158, 161) as well as of concerts in other cities in 1841–45 (pp. 189, 207, 211).

<sup>21</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 160–61. The concert was held on 30 January 1841.

<sup>22</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 135.

successfully the arranger conveyed his concept of “*partition*” to the audience in his virtuosic concerts.

The performance account cited above has some aspects in common with accounts of the previous *partitions*, but at the same time it is distinct from them. The common thread of all such accounts is that Liszt’s audience first paid attention to the unprecedented level of sound and power from the keyboard, surpassing the orchestra in his performance of this *partition*. We can recall Hallé’s famous account of Liszt’s performance of the “Marche au supplice” from Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* (see Chapter 3) and the sensational Viennese concert of 1839 that included the three last movements of Beethoven’s Pastoral Symphony (see Chapter 2).

Yet one of the distinctive aspects in the performance accounts of the Liszt–Rossini *partition* is that whereas the praise for Liszt’s performances of his *partitions* of the Berlioz and Beethoven symphonies resided in the “precision” of his arranging ability that captured the essence of the original in every detail, such an element of “precision” does not seem to be associated with his *partition* of Rossini’s overture. Rather, what dazzled the audience was what Liszt added to the Rossini *partition*. As discussed above, Carl Reinecke was amazed at “all manner of fantastic tricks” in Liszt’s rendering of *Guillaume Tell*. These “trick” that Reinecke observed immediately contrasted with the strict interpretation of Beethoven’s piano sonatas that Berlioz had praised in the virtuoso’s rendering of the *Hammerklavier*, as well as with his unremitting fidelity in his Beethoven *partitions*, as discussed in Chapter 2. Comparing the contemporary assessment of the Liszt–Beethoven *partitions* (see Chapter 2) and his Rossini *partition*

suggests that the audience had already noted Liszt's different approach to orchestral music by Beethoven and Rossini.

The relationship between Liszt and Rossini also serves as one of the decisive elements in defining Liszt's attitude toward this particular arrangement. Liszt's unwavering veneration for Beethoven led him to regard the original composition as a "sacred" text, as he expressed in his concept of *partition*, whereas his admiration for Rossini manifested in a different direction. Although his relationship with Rossini has been not explored in detail, only in some general accounts, Liszt was probably a regular guest at Rossini's *soirées* during his sojourn in Italy in the 1830s while Rossini was in Italy, and Rossini was a highly enthusiastic audience member for Liszt's concerts.<sup>23</sup> Liszt also acknowledged Rossini's reputation and attempted to align himself with other composers in paying homage to him, as evident in his engagement with the predecessor's music prior to his arrangement of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* overture.<sup>24</sup> He had already composed variations on excerpts from Rossini's early operas in 1829 as well as fantasies on songs from Rossini's collection of *Les soirées musicales*, 8 ariettas, and 4 duets in 1835.<sup>25</sup> Liszt also conducted the *Guillaume Tell* overture at a concert at the City Theater

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<sup>23</sup> See Williams, *Portrait*, 99: in the audience was Rossini, who "paid tribute to the celebrated pianist with the liveliest applause," according to *La Moda* (report of 12 March) about Liszt's concert on the morning of 18 February 1838 in La Scala's Sala del Ridotto; for Rossini's participation again in Liszt's concert in 1839, see Williams, *Portrait*, 109. Kregor, "Franz Liszt," 242, n. 34, notes that Liszt and Rossini had become friends during the former's travels through Italy.

<sup>24</sup> *Impromptu brilliant sur des thèmes de Rossini et Spontini* (1824) based on the operas *Armida* (1817) and *La donna del lago* (1819); *Sept variations brillantes sur un thème de G. Rossini* (1824) based on *La donna del lago*. *La Serenata e l'Orgia*. *Grande Fantaisie sur des motifs des Soirées musicales*; *La pastorella dell'Alpi e Li marinari*. *2me Fantaisie sur des motifs des Soirées musicales*; *Soirées musicales*, all three fantasies written in 1835 and based on Rossini's *Les Soirées musicales*.

<sup>25</sup> Liszt's letter from Milan, 1838: "Rossini, now that he has become rich, idle and illustrious, has opened his house to his countrymen, and all winter long his rooms have been filled with people eager to come and pay homage to one of Italy's greatest glories. Surrounded by a swarm of young dilettantes, the maestro has delighted in making them study his most beautiful compositions; amateurs and artists alike have considered it an honor to be admitted to his concerts." Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, 84–85. Kregor,

in Pest on 26 January 1840.<sup>26</sup> In this context, his *Guillaume Tell* overture is part of his project in tribute to Rossini, as Charles Suttoni also notes.<sup>27</sup> Yet what Liszt sought out in his arrangement of Rossini's overture took a different direction from before. If in his previous *partitions* Liszt's homage to Beethoven led him to attempt to align himself with the German heritage as the master's heir in his thorough arrangement, Liszt's attitude toward Rossini's overture is more individual and liberal.

## Conclusion

Liszt's arrangement of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* Overture was written about a year after his earlier arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies were finished. It also pertains to the same group of *partitions* in sharing the overall transferral and reworking process associated with the concept of *partition*. Although we can still name Liszt's *Guillaume Tell* a *partition*, it discloses several of Liszt's unique reworking techniques that differentiate this *partition* from the mainstream of the *partitions*. As illustrated in Liszt's rendering of the English horn's solo passage in the *Ranz des vaches* section, Rossini's song texture is transformed into Liszt's opulent pianistic texture; but more importantly, he renders the tune in his own musical process of increasingly developing texture, sound, and effect over the course of the passage. This process reflects his attempts to compensate for the limitations of instrumental color on the piano when the tune is literally rendered, while at the same time it reflects his astute sense of turning these limitations into an opportunity and reinvigorating the tune in his own pianistic idiom.

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"Franz Liszt," 242, n. 34, asserts that Liszt's compositions "after" Rossini, including the *Soirées musicales de Rossini*, constitute part of his gratitude to Rossini.

<sup>26</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 120.

<sup>27</sup> Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, 83–84, n. 24.

Moreover, his rendering of the tune shares with his treatment of melodies in his transcriptions of Schubert songs, which were written around the same time and often performed together with his *Guillaume Tell*, as if transporting the audience into the realm of Liszt's fantasy. The fantasy-like aspect of the arrangement is reinforced by Liszt's frequent additions of improvisatory-like passages throughout. This free writing is more copious and conspicuous than in any other *partition*, incorporating into his piano arrangement the cadenzas, improvisations, and embellishments that would have been heard from singers performing Rossini's operas. Although these fantasy-like additions seem transitory in the midst of the overall faithful *partition*, the impulse behind them has something in common with his enriching and elaborating process of *Ranz des vaches* in his rendition of his *Guillaume Tell*.

Liszt's *Guillaume Tell* also demonstrates his attentive approach to the distinctive sounds and effects of the individual instruments, as already shown in his earlier *partitions*. The meticulous instrumental cues are drastically reduced in Liszt's *Guillaume Tell*, in contrast with their abundance in the previous *partitions*. Instead, he carefully selected only a few instrumental cues, heightening the distinctive use of solo instruments in the original. Liszt's treatment of the timpani's salient rolls, in particular, illustrates how shrewdly he captures the structural and sonorous importance of the instrument's memorable rolls inherent in the original and how faithfully he renders these rolls first in the literal sense of conventional trills, then immediately developing them into a more chromatic, dramatic, and rumbling bass line in his highly individual terms. This interaction of fidelity and creativity is not unique to this arrangement, but his pianistic equivalent of the timpani's rolls lends the impression that he is extemporizing. His



rendering of the timpani's rolls thus gains particular meaning in relation to the improvisatory, fantasy-like quality of this arrangement that helps to distinguish it from the other *partitions*.

The performance accounts have helped to associate Liszt's *Guillaume Tell* more with his improvisation. The contemporary audience was amazed at Liszt's use of "fantastic tricks" in his rendering of *Guillaume Tell*, contrasting sharply with the precision and scrupulousness noted in the reception of the Liszt–Beethoven *partitions*, as discussed in Chapter 2. Liszt showed his reverence for both Beethoven and Rossini, but his attempts to align himself with each of his predecessors are different: unwavering allegiance to the former and more liberality toward the latter. Although the audience still heard Rossini's music through Liszt's faithful observance of the original structure, the performance accounts and several of his distinctive reworking methods help to show us a freer, more flexible and individual type of arrangement than his earlier *partitions*. After all, a Beethoven or a Berlioz symphony may be a "sacred text," but a Rossini opera is a platform for performance in the same way that a Rossini aria is an opportunity for the soprano to show off her skills and expressivity, not to adhere to the text. Liszt's distinctive approach to *partition* continued in his last group, those of Weber's overtures, in which he further "reassessed" the concept of *partition*.

## Chapter 5

### Reassessing the *Partition* 2: Weber's *Oberon*, *Jubilee*, and *Der Freischütz* Overtures

The editors of the *Neue Liszt Ausgabe* categorize Liszt's arrangements of Weber's overtures with the group of his previous *partitions*, remarking that Liszt's versions follow the original "faithfully" (referring to the Weber–Liszt *Oberon*), "exactly, almost note for note" (*Der Freischütz*), and "down to the greatest detail" (*Jubilee*).<sup>1</sup> These assessments are true at first glance in that Liszt continues to preserve the integrity of the original orchestral compositions, in keeping with his project of the *partitions*, particularly those of the orchestral music of Berlioz and Beethoven. Yet simultaneously, Liszt also distinguishes his arrangements of Weber's overtures from the previous ones of orchestral music by Berlioz, Beethoven, and Rossini.

First, as noted earlier in Chapter 1, we may immediately notice the complete absence of the detailed cues of instruments. The use of meticulous instrumental cues was one of the crucial characteristics in defining the concept of *partition* in the first stage, and thus its absence brings into question how we would contextualize this group of Weber–Liszt arrangements in the category of *partition*. Second, Liszt's transferring and reworking process in his Weber arrangements demonstrates his pianistic amplification of the original, as had been often practiced in the previous *partitions*. Yet his amplification is prompted by his attempts to heighten the dramatic representation of Weber's operas, particularly in his version of *Der Freischütz* overture. Finally, towards the other end of

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<sup>1</sup> *NLA*, Book 23, xi.

the spectrum of reworkings, a simplification of the original is also prominent. This simplification does not seem to be perfunctory or to stem from the practical matter of omissions commonly involved in the transferring process, but instead demonstrates Liszt's attempts to seek out successful pianistic solutions to the dramatic and rapid orchestral writing intrinsic to Weber's compositions.

Before we investigate these reworkings in detail, the following discussions help to clarify Liszt's relationship with Weber through his performing, conducting, and editing or interpreting of his predecessor's music. Liszt's engagement with Weber's legacy deepens our understanding of the underlying aesthetics of his arrangements. The main focus of the current chapter is on Liszt's reworking process, demonstrating how he makes effective use of the contrasting aspects of amplification and simplification in order to successfully heighten Weber's dramatic orchestral writing, while simultaneously suggesting his own recreation of the original. To conclude the consideration of Liszt's arrangements of Weber's overtures, I address the notational issues of the absence of instrumental cues as mentioned above, contextualizing this element in overall study of the *partitions* so far. In this regard, it is necessary to revisit the discussion in Chapter 1 of Liszt's meticulous notation on his *partitions* in order to lend a complete sense of his approach to scrupulous notational devices in the spectrum of his *partition* groups.

### **Liszt's Relationship with Weber**

Liszt's reverence for Weber was well documented before he arranged the three overtures for piano in the 1840s. The names of Beethoven and Weber often appear conjointly in those accounts. The memoirs of Auguste Boissier bear witness to Liszt's reverent

attitude towards both Beethoven and Weber in a piano lesson of 19 January 1832; Liszt “expressed profound humility before Weber and Beethoven, maintaining that he was as yet unworthy of executing their works, though he sets the piano on fire whenever he plays them.”<sup>2</sup> Liszt also “regarded, apart from Beethoven, Weber alone as his intellectual predecessor, and the initiator of the modern [Romantic] school.”<sup>3</sup> As discussed earlier about Liszt’s relationship with Beethoven, when he confessed by 1837 that he had often made additions to the music of Beethoven, Weber, and Hummel in response to the demands of the public, he now resolved to preserve fidelity to their compositions, in accord with “the most profound respect for the masterpieces of great composers” (see Chapter 2). The music of Beethoven and Weber was also presented as a model of serious instrumental music when Liszt was concerned about their music being difficult to understand for Italian audiences in 1838.<sup>4</sup> Liszt consistently referred to Weber in the same breath as Beethoven, showing his high regard for the two older composers as his constant inspiration.<sup>5</sup>

Liszt’s admiration for Weber is also evident in his various activities regarding his predecessor’s music. His engagement with Weber can be seen in (1) the vast number of his performances of Weber’s compositions, (2) a succession of compositions based on his predecessor’s music in a range from faithful arrangements to free adaptations, (3) his

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<sup>2</sup> Auguste Boissier, *Liszt pédagogue: leçons de piano données par Liszt à Mademoiselle Valérie Boissier à Paris en 1832* (Paris: Honoré Champion, 1927); an English translation of the diary in Elyse Mach, “Liszt Pédagogue: A Diary of Franz Liszt as Teacher 1831–32 by Madame Auguste Boissier,” in *The Liszt Studies: Essential Selections from the Original 12-Volume Set of Technical Studies for the Piano* (New York: Associated Music Publishers, 1973), xiv.

<sup>3</sup> NAL, Book 23, x, n. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Liszt, *An Artist’s Journey*, 90.

<sup>5</sup> NAL, Book 23, x; Tusa, “Exploring the Master’s Influence: Liszt and the Music of Carl Maria von Weber,” *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 45 (1999): 1–33, at 15. For further accounts of Liszt’s references to Weber and Beethoven in combination, see La Mara, *Letters*, I, 8; *Ibid.*, II, 425; Liszt, *An Artist’s Journey*, 183.

early appearances as a conductor, and (4) his later critical editions of Weber's piano compositions (1868–70).

First, Liszt's performances of Weber's compositions are well documented. Weber's *Konzertstück* in F minor for Piano and Orchestra, for example, appeared in Liszt's concert programs of the 1830s more often than any other composition.<sup>6</sup> His rendition of the work is known to have magnified its grandeur and virtuosity and brought its "military aura" to a climax.<sup>7</sup> It was also used to challenge Thalberg in the famous duel of 1837, generating the most sensational commentary from critics.<sup>8</sup> Second, Liszt wrote a number of compositions based on Weber's music in 1847–48, covering the gamut from faithful arrangements of Weber's three overtures to a paraphrase of, a free adaptation of, and a theme and variations on Weber's music.<sup>9</sup>

Third, the prominence of Weber's overtures extends to Liszt's earliest appearances as a conductor, as in the benefit concert on January 11, 1840 in the Hungarian Theater of Pest, where he conducted the *Oberon* Overture.<sup>10</sup> The *Neue Liszt Ausgabe* editors relate this concert to Liszt's reverence for the three predecessors, Beethoven, Mozart, and Weber, through his conducting of the *Chorfantasie*, Op. 80, and the overture of *Die Zauberflöte* alongside the *Oberon* overture.<sup>11</sup> A short time later, Liszt

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<sup>6</sup> Gooley, "Warhorses: Liszt, Weber's *Konzertstück*, and the Cult of Napoleon," in *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 78–116. Saffle, *Liszt in Germany*, 187, notes the *Konzertstück* as the fifteenth most frequently performed piece in Liszt's repertory during the period 1840–1845. Liszt's first encounter with Weber's compositions was his performance of the *Momento capriccioso*, Op. 12, at a public concert in 1823. Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 88, n. 43; Dezső Legány, "Liszt in Hungary, 1820–1844," in *Liszt and his World: Proceedings of the International Liszt Conference held at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 20–23 May 1993*, ed. Michael Saffle, 3–16 (Stuyvesant, NY: Pendragon Press, 1998), 5.

<sup>7</sup> Gooley, "Warhorses," in *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 81.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 94–105.

<sup>9</sup> Tusa, "Exploring," 10, provides a table of Liszt's eight known Weber arrangements.

<sup>10</sup> Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 344; *NLA*, Book 23, x; Williams, *Portrait*, 120; Tusa, "Exploring," 4.

<sup>11</sup> *NLA*, Book 23, x.

combined the *Oberon* overture with Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* overture in his conducting at the City Theater in Pest on January 26, 1840.<sup>12</sup> It is important in the study of Liszt's *partitions* that the Pest concerts of 1840 in turn represent Liszt's consummation of the masterpieces, as he believed, of his three most important predecessors, Beethoven, Weber, and Rossini, all of who had provided models for his *partitions*.

Finally, Liszt's engagement with Weber is represented in his edition of Weber's piano music in 1868–70. Liszt's primary goal for the Weber edition, along with his Schubert edition, was stated in a letter of 1868: "fully and carefully to retain the original text together with provisory suggestions of my way of rendering it, by means of distinguishing letters, notes, and signs."<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting Liszt's "provisory suggestions," by which he actually changed and added notes to the so-called "edition of Weber." As Tusa points out, Liszt's Weber edition may appear far from the modern standard of Urtext, yet his edition was carefully prepared in such a way that the original of Weber as basic text is presented in large print, whereas his own editorial suggestions, including pedal markings and fingerings, are in small type.<sup>14</sup> The resulting edition thus helps pianists who want to play Weber's original, because they can simply disregard the material in small print.<sup>15</sup> Some of his modifications, however, draw attention to his unique compositional and performance approach. He often thickens Weber's texture to create a fuller sound by transforming the accompanimental patterns through additional notes or chords.<sup>16</sup> On the radical side of modification, he incorporates his transcendental

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<sup>12</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 120.

<sup>13</sup> La Mara, *Letters*, II, 160; cited in Tusa, "Exploring," 6.

<sup>14</sup> Tusa, "Exploring," 6.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

techniques such as alternative octaves or chords between the two hands and *glissandi* involving both hands.<sup>17</sup> Significant for the current discussion is not merely that Liszt changed or transformed the original in his editorial process but that the resulting thickening process has a parallel with that used in the transferring and reworking process of his Weber orchestral arrangements, as will be illustrated in the musical examples below.

Liszt performed his arrangements of Weber's overtures in both private and public concerts. His exposure to Weber's overtures probably occurred first in his youthful Paris years, 1822–23, when Weber's *Der Freischütz* enjoyed great popularity in Vienna, perhaps leading him to explore the opera.<sup>18</sup> Although his arrangements of the three overtures were published together toward the end of his years as a virtuoso concert pianist, he had performed earlier versions of the overture arrangements prior to publication.<sup>19</sup> In early 1832, Liszt played a four-hand arrangement of the *Der Freischütz* overture with his student Valérie.<sup>20</sup> In his diary on 6 January 1841, John Orland Parry recorded Liszt's performance of his arrangement of the *Der Freischütz* overture and regarded it as "gigantic," "wonderful," "yet beautiful."<sup>21</sup> Liszt included his arrangements of the *Oberon*, *Freischütz*, and *Jubel* overtures in his concert repertoire, as noted in the

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 1–2.

<sup>19</sup> As shown earlier in Table 1, *NLA* claims that the *Oberon* and *Freischütz* arrangements were composed in the early 1840 and the *Jubel* in 1846. Sharon Winklhofer's revision of Humphrey Searle's catalogue of Liszt's music provides the same date for *Jubel*, but specifies the date of the *Oberon* as 1843 and provides a different date for *Freischütz*, 1846, the year before all three were published together. Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 155–56, discusses the publication process briefly.

<sup>20</sup> Mach, *Liszt Studies*, xiii.

<sup>21</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 156; Tusa, "Exploring," 10. Tusa, "In Defense of Weber," in *Nineteenth-Century Piano Music*, ed. R. Larry Todd, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2004), 144–77, at 149, also provides information about Liszt's performance of his *Freischütz* overture arrangement on 26 April 1843 in St. Petersburg.

*Programme générale des morceaux exécutés par F. Liszt à ses concerts de 1838 à 1848* compiled by Liszt and his assistant August Conradi in the early years of Liszt's tenure at Weimar.<sup>22</sup> Liszt programmed his *Oberon* *partition* twice in his Vienna concerts of 1846.<sup>23</sup>

Weber's influence on Liszt's breakthrough in keyboard technique in the 1830s is well known. Weber was at the forefront of early nineteenth-century pianists in developing special pianistic techniques and sonorities, as represented in his increased use of forearm techniques that facilitate rapid octave and chordal playing, an orchestral approach to the keyboard (including *tremolando* bass), a particular use of the left hand for the cantilena melody, and one hand executing both the sustained melody and staccato chords simultaneously.<sup>24</sup> These particular pianistic techniques, textures, and sonorities are considered to have provided a foundation for Liszt to expand his own pianistic techniques and idioms during his early years as a virtuoso concert pianist–composer.<sup>25</sup>

The influence of Weber's orchestral approach to piano writing on Liszt has led scholars to examine Liszt's piano writing through the lens of Weber's image. In relation to our repertoire of Liszt's orchestral arrangements, for instance, Jonathan Kregor points out the affinity between the second theme-group of Weber's C-major Sonata and Liszt's pianistic version of the Allegro theme of the *Oberon* Overture in the texture that evokes a

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<sup>22</sup> Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 445–48; Tusa, "Exploring," 4. Performance dates of individual pieces are, however, not provided.

<sup>23</sup> Legány, *Presse und Briefe*, 102, 106.

<sup>24</sup> Tusa, "Exploring," 16; for the anecdotes about left-hand technique, see Göllicher, *Piano Master Classes*, 53, 139. For further discussions of Weber's expansion of pianistic techniques and sonorities in his piano compositions, see Tusa, "In Defense of Weber," 147–77, *passim*.

<sup>25</sup> Tusa, "Exploring," 16; Williams, *Portrait*, 635, records Liszt's account in 1884 that credited Weber's piano compositions as his inspiration from the age of seventeen and his description of his predecessor's specific piano techniques, such as a *cantilena* in the left hand, as unprecedented at the time.



multi-layered orchestral texture.<sup>26</sup> The resemblance is so striking that it bolsters the continuity of Liszt's homage to Weber in this particular arrangement. Liszt's indebtedness to Weber's piano music as orchestral by nature has also led to a general tendency to read Liszt's transcriptions of Weber's overtures in relation to the expansion of the piano writing and sound as an emulation of the orchestral texture and sound, as viewed by Jonathan Kregor and Michael Tusa. Otherwise, the Weber–Liszt arrangements have been mentioned only cursorily.

Liszt's *partitions* of Weber's overtures are abundant with the orchestral dimension of pianistic techniques and sonorities, which include thickening of the original texture to produce a fuller sound, amplification of the melody by octave doubling, and enriched low-register sonorities, particularly by means of octave tremolos, thickened chords, and wide-spread arpeggios in the bass. The expansion of pianistic writing to imitate orchestral sonorities and textures is one of the essential features in Liszt's reworking throughout his arrangements of Weber's overtures, as also commonly found in his previous *partitions*. However, in an opposite extreme of his reworking, as mentioned above, it is also striking to see the drastically simplified versions—moreover, a simplification that is found more frequently than in the previous *partitions*. The following discussion thus focuses on examples of both sides of Liszt's amplification and simplification in his reworking process, demonstrating how he attempts to capture the sounds and effects emanating from Weber's dramatic orchestral writing by making the two contrasting methods interact effectively.

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<sup>26</sup> Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 164. In both instances, the right hand suggests the soprano and alto in contrapuntal dialogue, whereas the left hand evokes the supporting yet active group of the bass and tenor (the viola).

## **Amplification**

On the side of amplification, the orchestral texture and sound are rendered by several regular features of the pianistic writing. They include doubled octaves, particularly in the left hand; chords thickened by additions such as thirds and sixths; and more challenging accompanimental patterns such as rolled arpeggiated chords that span a tenth in conjunction with a leaping figure. Against the backdrop of these features that were already present in the previous *partitions*, Examples 5.1a and 5.1b illustrate how Liszt reinterprets the virtuosic orchestral writing intrinsic to Weber's *Jubilee* Overture in his highly individual manner of virtuosic pianistic writing.

Example 5.1a. Weber, *Jubilee Overture*, “God Save The King,” mm. 356–59

Andante.

Flauti piccolini. *ff*

Flauti. *ff*

Oboi. *ff*

Clarinetti in A. *ff* *sempre tutti fortissimo*

Fagotti. *ff*

Corni in E. *ff*

Corni in C. *ff*

Trombe in E. *ff*

Timpani in E.H. *ff*

Triangolo. *ff*

Piatti e Gran Cassa. *ff*

Alto. Tenore. *ff*

Tromboni. *ff*

Basso. *ff*

Violino I. *ff*

Violino II. *ff*

Viola. *ff*

Violoncello e Basso. *ff*

Example 5.1b. *Jubilee Overture*, “God Save The King,” mm. 356–59, Liszt arrangement

Ossia Andante

356

*ff* *sempre tutti* *ff*

6 6

358

Example 5.1a is drawn from the section based on the English national anthem, “God Save The King,” which is a concluding coda to Weber’s *Jubilee* overture.<sup>27</sup> The section by itself is virtuosic in Weber’s version, particularly associated with the relentless thirty-second notes of the string writing. Yet Weber’s music becomes more stunningly virtuosic in Liszt’s version. The *ossia* of Example 5.1b (in the first system of the example) suggests a literal rendering of the original, whereas the passage underneath indicates Liszt’s own version. His rendering reduces the density of the notes but amplifies the sound by means of doubled octaves in both hands. The forceful and relentless octave passages in turn create an effective acoustical and visual dimension of experience of the music on the piano.

Example 5.1c shows Liszt’s further variant and development of pianistic virtuosity, in contrast with the consistently unfolding scales from the strings of the orchestral score.

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<sup>27</sup> The melody of the *God save the King* has been incorporated into compositions by several composers including Beethoven, Weber, Paganini, Brahms, Debussy, and Ives. *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “God Save the King [Queen],” by Alison Latham, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 15 November 2014. Liszt also used this melody for one of his paraphrases in c. 1841 prior to his arrangement of the *Jubilee* overture. For the frequent performance accounts of the paraphrase in the London concerts during 1840–1841, see Williams, *Portrait*, 148–49, 161–62.

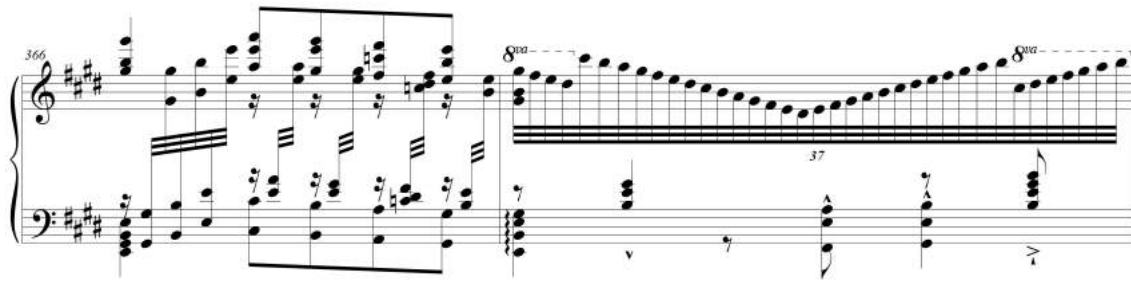
Example 5.1c. *Jubilee Overture*, “God Save The King,” mm. 360–61, Liszt arrangement

The image displays a musical score for the piano arrangement of "God Save The King" from the Jubilee Overture, measures 360-61. The score is written for a grand staff with four staves. The top two staves (treble and bass clef) feature a rapid ascending scale in the right hand, with a "22" marking indicating a specific fingering or measure. The bottom two staves (treble and bass clef) show a dense, rhythmic accompaniment with many beamed notes. A "361" marking is visible at the start of the bottom section. The score is labeled "8va" at the end, indicating an octave shift.

Liszt does not attempt to transcribe the thirty-second notes of the strings literally. Had he done that, it would have cluttered the score and hindered the melodic clarity of the national anthem in the piano score. In addition, it would have resulted in strain on the wrist and uneasiness in execution. Instead, Liszt focuses more on expanding the sound and texture appropriate for the piano score, thickening the chords yet simplifying the string figurations into pianistic sextuplets as well as drastically reducing other parts such as the cellos' dotted rhythm in the accompaniment. Liszt's rendering thus heightens the consistently dense scales for the strings in a fuller and heavier pianistic version with doubled octaves in both hands, while preserving the clarity of the melody.

The richness of sound and texture is further developed in Example 5.2, in conjunction with further permutations of virtuosic figurations.

Example 5.2. *Jubilee Overture*, “God Save The King,” mm. 366–67, Liszt arrangement



The virtuosic figurations proceed first in rapidly alternating octaves in ascending motion, then in alternating chords over a broad range of the keyboard in a descending motion, and finally, in extended scales that turn the original scale spanning less than three octaves into four octaves. It is important to note that Weber’s writing insists on the scale passage in thirty-second notes being the same as in Example 5.1 above, yet Liszt refuses to render it the same. Liszt’s virtuosity here lies less in the simple fact that he deploys his own stunning virtuosic figuration than in his expansion of and experimentation with those figurations. He avoids the simple repetition of the bravura figuration but instead constantly changes it. The result of his reworking is to augment the intensity of the original orchestral texture and sound on the keyboard, while simultaneously suggesting his reinterpretation of the original in nuanced pianistic terms through his technical accomplishments.

In conclusion, throughout the “God Save The King” section, Weber’s virtuosity lies in the consistent and relentless thirty-second-note scales focused on the strings, whereas Liszt’s virtuosity is created by his amplification of the sound and texture both vertically and horizontally, as illustrated in Example 5.1. Alongside the expansion and richness, he also deploys a constant shift of virtuosic figurations to sustain the intensity

and interest of the orchestral texture and sound, while simultaneously dazzling the audience with his recreation of a performance, as shown in Example 5.2. At the same time, as we have noted, there is also a practical merit in his exploitation of the varied figurations: had he been consistent with the initial repeated octaves in both hands as in Example 5.1b, it would have caused uneasiness and strain on the wrist in the execution.

In the context of the entire group of his *partitions*, including those of Weber's overtures, Liszt's amplification process is not unusual in accordance with his aspiration to approximate the massive orchestral effect on the keyboard and at the same time to offer his own pianistic rendering with his virtuosic accomplishments. Yet his rendering of "God Save The King" in Weber's *Jubilee* overture, as in Examples 5.1 and 5.2, is highly conspicuous, and characteristic of his amplification process in conjunction with his nuanced use of technical bravura and his efforts to re-create a performance.

### **Amplification and Dramatic Representation**

The amplification in texture and sonority, in particular, heightens the dramatic content emanating from Weber's writing. The Overture to Weber's *Freischütz*, for instance, sets the stage for the essence of the entire opera: a fundamental opposition between the normal world of ordinary people (Max and Agathe) and the evil domain of Samiel.<sup>28</sup> In the overture, the two contrasting realms and characters are musically portrayed at first

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<sup>28</sup> Weber himself says, "In *Freischütz* there are two principal elements that can be recognized at first glance: the hunting life and the force of the demonic powers, personified by Samiel. My first task in the composition of the opera was to find the most significant tone and sound-colors for these two elements." Christian Johann Lobe, "Gespräche mit Weber," in *Fliegende Blätter für Musik* (Leipzig: Baumgärtner's Buchhandlung, 1855), I, 31; trans. and cited in Stephen C. Meyer, "Der *Freischütz* and the Character of the Nation," in *Carl Maria von Weber and the Search for a German Opera* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 82, n. 15.



sight by the dramatic key associations. C minor refers to the dark powers of the devilish Samiel, whereas Eb major appears in the second theme-group of the exposition and represents the domain of Agathe.<sup>29</sup> The C-minor association with Samiel's domain is reinforced by the mysterious string tremolos and chromatic harmony, whereas Agathe's theme (clarinet solo) unfolds in diatonic harmony. Examples 5.3a and 5.4a correspond to the two contrasting realms, respectively, whereas Examples 5.3b and 5.4b illustrate Liszt's version of these realms.

Example 5.3a. Weber, *Der Freischütz* Overture, "Samiel's realm," mm. 30–36

The musical score for Example 5.3a shows measures 30–36 of Weber's *Der Freischütz* Overture. The instrumentation includes Clarinet (Cl.), Violins (Vn.), Violas (Va.), and Violoncello/Double Bass (Vc.). The key signature is C minor (three flats) and the time signature is 4/4. The music features a dramatic dynamic range from mezzo-forte (mf) to pianissimo (pp), with crescendos and decrescendos. The strings play a tremolo pattern, and the clarinet has a melodic line. The Vc. part includes an 'arco' marking.

<sup>29</sup> Meyer, "Der Freischütz," 93.

Ossia più difficile

30

cresc.

*f*

*p*

cresc.

32

cresc.

*ff*

12

arpeggiando

6

34

decresc.

*pp*

*pp*

Example 5.4a. Weber, *Der Freischütz* Overture, “Agathe’s realm,” mm. 95–100

Cl. Solo.

con molto passione

*ff*

Hn. *fz*

Tbn. *fz*

Vn. *p*

Va. *p*

Vc. *p* tenuto

Example 5.4b. *Der Freischütz* Overture, “Agathe’s realm,” mm. 95–100, Liszt arrangement

95

*ff* con molto passione

con Ped.

Ossia

tremolando

98

The dramatic opposition captures Liszt's attention. As illustrated in Examples 5.3b and 5.4b, in arranging these two passages, Liszt deploys conspicuous bass figurations that are suitable for the two realms of Samiel and Agathe to heighten the two contrasting forces. The contrasting effect of the two passages is immediately recognizable. The *ossia* of Example 5.3b—which was performed by Liszt himself (as will be discussed below)—displays a chromatic bass associated with Samiel's dark powers, whereas Example 5.4b presents diatonic arpeggios for the accompaniment to Agathe's theme.

The contrasting harmonic content and its effect are Weber's, yet the way it is treated in effective pianistic terms is Liszt's. Both basses in the piano score are virtuosic and memorable, yet the way each bass unfolds elicits a contrasting effect in a remarkable way. The chromatic bass of Example 5.3b proceeds against the agitated tremolos in an effective *crescendo*. In contrast, the diatonic arpeggios of Example 5.4b accompany the warm clarinet melody, unfolding in an opulent and sonorous texture with decreased dynamic. Thus, Weber's musical portrayal of the two contrasting characters by means of the harmonic content and orchestral timbres is rendered in Liszt's individual pianistic terms with the two contrasting pianistic figurations, which are equally indelible.

The memorable figurations of Example 5.3b, in particular, must have amazed the contemporary audience, as Eva Hanska associated them with the “sounds of the distant storm rumbling” in her diary on the occasion of Liszt's public performance of the arrangement of Weber's *Freischütz* in St. Petersburg on April 1843:

Liszt greeted his idolatrous audience with a somewhat coy grace, tossing his long hair back with a sudden movement of the head and sitting down. He began with the overture to *Freischütz*, and no sooner did I hear the muffled sounds of the distant storm rumbling under his left hand, than the electric spark of admiration suddenly kindled my sluggish feelings; they understood, felt, admired! What shall I say? To hear him is to contemplate

nature, for his playing is the whole of nature felt and revealed by the inspiration of genius.<sup>30</sup>

Hanska's account captures at first the virtuoso's choreographic movement ("tossing his long hair back with a sudden movement of the head"), which coexists simultaneously with the visual and aural dimension of his performing style (the "rumbling" left hand that evokes the "distant storm"), ultimately eliciting unprecedented effects beyond mere keyboard sound (the sounds he produces like "the whole of nature").

Hanska's assessment above may not be surprising in relation to the countless accounts of Liszt's extraordinary performances, as demonstrated earlier in the performances of his arrangements of Berlioz and Beethoven's symphonies. It is, however, worth noting that Hanska heard "the muffled sounds of the distant storm rumbling under his left hand." This sound, as Michael Tusa identifies, immediately evokes a passage in the slow introduction of the *Freischütz* Overture (mm. 30–35), as shown in Example 5.3b above.<sup>31</sup> In the example, the *ossia più difficile* of the passage alternates the "rumbling" chromatic bass with the bravura arpeggios of the right hand. Hanska's hearing of the "rumbling" bass, therefore, immediately informs us that Liszt performed the passage's *ossia*, which is more demanding, more virtuosic, and thus more visually spectacular than his faithful rendering underneath. Liszt's playing in turn made Hanska "contemplate nature" and hear the sound of "the whole of nature," transporting her to a realm beyond the instrument's capacity. These aspects discussed above—the virtuosity *par excellence* as in the difficult *ossia*, the expansion of the sonorous potential of the piano, and the pianistic rendering of the dramatic expression of the original—all

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<sup>30</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 198.

<sup>31</sup> Tusa, "Exploring," 11.

help illuminate a specific layer of Liszt's rendering and rendition of this particular arrangement, encapsulate some of the conspicuous features of the arrangement, and thus make this arrangement more individual than others.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Interaction of Simplification and Amplification**

Liszt's simplification process appears variously throughout the arrangements. As in the amplification process, it is used to heighten the dramatic orchestral writing, yet it creates its unique effects by facilitating more rapid execution and thus eliciting another layer of spectacular musical and visual sensation. Moreover, Liszt's simplification process in his Weber arrangements has some correspondence with his modifications in his edition of Weber's piano music, suggesting the common thread of his reworking in his engagement with Weber's music.

Examples 5.5a and 5.5b illustrate how Liszt condenses Weber's texture in pianistic octave triplets yet in a visually stunning way.

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<sup>32</sup> Aside from the indelible bass figuration, as discussed above, the addition of several bass figurations in rolled chords or short arpeggios attracts our attention throughout the arrangement of Weber's *Freischütz*. Although the characteristic bass seems like a minor alteration, it plays a distinctive role through the frequency of its appearance and the freshness in the resultant sound, as illustrated in the passages of mm. 22–25 and 209–19. The additional bass figures lend the impression of a diminutive version of the “rumbling” bass that Hanska heard in Liszt's performance above.

[illegible]

In Liszt's version, Weber's scales against tremolos are completely revitalized in an octave passage in both hands, which move in astonishing contrary motion by converging into the middle of the keyboard and then expanding out. Such contrary motion and the registral expansion both contribute to the visual spectacle, as listeners watch Liszt at the piano. Rather than rendering the passage faithfully or cluttering the piano score by deploying pianistic substitutes for string tremolos, Liszt drastically condenses and simplifies Weber's texture into the bare octave passages. This reworking in turn not only facilitates more rapid execution and thus creates a more powerfully visual effect but also conveys a more straightforward manner of expression. Thus, the simplification in process, the directness in expression, and the rapidity in execution all serve as symbiotic elements to recreate the original in Liszt's reading. In addition, it is worth noting that for Liszt, Weber's forceful scale in descending and then ascending motion seems to be more important than any other elements, taking its direction and energy as initial inspiration but using it for his own purpose. The result of his simplification ironically becomes his amplification of the main feature of the original.

Liszt's reworking of Example 5.5b thus demonstrates an intriguing dynamic of his amplification and simplification, although the amplification here is not the same as the overall amplification process. He "amplifies" surface elements such as the main idea of the original and the spectacle, and at the same time he "simplifies" the original material by reducing it. By exploiting the two contrasting sides simultaneously, Liszt is able to heighten both the original and his re-creation.



Liszt's simplification process is often combined with a particular piano technique that involves a rapid alternation between each hand playing in octaves, as illustrated in Examples 5.6a and 5.6b.

Example 5.6a. Weber, *Jubilee Overture*, mm. 169–72, only strings

The musical score for strings (Violins, Violas, and Cellos/Double Basses) from Weber's *Jubilee Overture*, measures 169–72. The score is written for Violins (Vn.), Violas (Va.), and Cellos/Double Basses (Vc.). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is marked *cresc.* (crescendo) and *ff* (fortissimo). The strings play a rapid eighth-note pattern in octaves, with the Violins and Violas playing in the treble clef and the Cellos/Double Basses playing in the bass clef. The pattern is repeated across the measures, with the intensity increasing as indicated by the *ff* marking.

Example 5.6b. *Jubilee Overture*, mm. 169–72, Liszt arrangement

The musical score for piano from Liszt's arrangement of Weber's *Jubilee Overture*, measures 169–72. The score is written for piano (piano). The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The tempo is marked *cresc.* (crescendo) and *precipitato* (precipitato). The piano plays a rapid eighth-note pattern in octaves, with the right hand playing in the treble clef and the left hand playing in the bass clef. The pattern is repeated across the measures, with the intensity increasing as indicated by the *precipitato* marking.

Liszt's version corresponds to the *forte* orchestral passage that further accumulates intensity by repeating an eighth-note pattern from the strings and also further increases its volume by embarking on a *crescendo*. Liszt's simplification process with the technique of rapid octave alternation between the hands facilitates further rapidity in execution and thus creates a spectacular effect, as in Example 5.6b above. The technique as part of a

simplification process, however, abruptly occurs in the midst of faithful rendering. In other words, Liszt transfers the passage in a literal manner until he suddenly shifts to the rapidly alternating hands in octaves from m. 169, as his own remark *precipitato* (“precipitously”) suggests.

Liszt “simplified” and “amplified” the original simultaneously. He simplified the orchestral texture by eliminating the notes of the winds and horn, yet at the same time he amplified the central idea of the string writing by doubling some notes of the string figure at the octave above. He actually took the idea of the alternating-hand technique from Weber; in mm. 169–70, the figure is sometimes doubled an octave below in the cellos, as rendered exactly in Liszt’s version, and sometimes left undoubled, which Liszt then doubles at the octave above. Thus, in a sense, his reworking as shown in mm. 169–70 demonstrates an amplification of the string figure, while deleting the wind notes. He then continues the alternation in mm. 171–72.

It is intriguing to see that the technique of alternating the hands in octaves above serves as one of the important methods in Liszt’s revisions in his edition of Weber. At the end of the second movement of Weber’s *Konzertstück*, for example, Liszt used *ff strepitoso* (“boisterious”) octave alternations as a substitute for Weber’s more linear passage.<sup>33</sup> The passage would have facilitated the “inconceivable rapidity” of the hands that made it “impossible to follow” for the audience, as a contemporary audience member Count Apponyi heard in Liszt’s 1832 performance of the piece.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Tusa, “Exploring,” 8.

<sup>34</sup> Count Apponyi described Liszt’s performance of the piece in April 1832, “He is especially admirable in one passage, written entirely in octaves, which he plays with such speed and strength that his hands seem to multiply. It is impossible to follow them with the eye, such is the inconceivable rapidity

Examples 5.7a and 5.7b also demonstrate that the rapid sixteenth-note figuration in the orchestral score is converted to octave triplets in Liszt's piano score.

Example 5.7a. Weber, *Oberon* Overture, mm. 35–37, only strings

Example 5.7b. *Oberon* Overture, mm. 35–37, Liszt arrangement

Had Liszt transferred the sixteenth-note violin passage into a single line of the right hand in his piano score, the dramatic effect emanating from the original *fortissimo* and rapid writing would have been diminished. Also, the clarity of the single thematic line in the

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with which they move: they fly from one end of the piano to the other.” Williams, *Portrait*, 50; cited in Tusa, “Exploring,” 8, n. 31.

piano score would have become challenged by the thick chordal passage of the left hand, which approximates the orchestral volume generated from the tremolos and sustained notes. In addition, had Liszt rendered the violin passage literally—that is, octave doubling of the rapid sixteenth-note passage—this would have created unidiomatic writing at the keyboard and also would have been impractical because it probably would have caused greater strain on the wrist of the pianist.

It is worth noting that Liszt “simplified” the rapid string passage in octave doubling to triplets, yet “amplified” it by rendering it an octave higher in mm. 35 and 37. In contrast, he returns to the string writing at a pitch in m. 36. His reworking enables him to fulfill the dual demands of keeping up the *ff* orchestral sound and making it playable on the keyboard. He preserved the octave doubling where it exists in the Weber score, yet “simplifying” it for rapidity and “amplifying” for the effect of the string writing.

Liszt also did not render the entire passage in pianistic triplets, but alternated the octave triplets with a more literal version, as in his approach to the sixteenth notes in m. 36 articulated by his specific fingering. This alternation conveys his carefully calculated plan of reworking, moving the passage forward in keeping with the overall dramatic and rapid orchestral writing, yet never losing the sense of preserving the integrity of the original.

In the spectrum of Liszt’s *partitions* as a whole, his simplification process, as observed in Examples 5.5–5.7, sets his arrangements of Weber’s overtures apart from the other groups of *partitions*. The simplification as a reworking method is far more prominent and conspicuous in the arrangements of Weber’s overtures, in contrast with the few instances in the entire group of the previous *partitions*. The earlier *partitions* of

Berlioz and Beethoven's compositions, in particular, are situated at the other end of spectrum, because they focus on a greater degree of detail in the original.<sup>35</sup> The impetus for Liszt's simplified reworkings in the Weber overture arrangements is, nevertheless, drawn from the ideas of the original and used to amplify the characteristic features of the original.

The underlying aesthetics of Liszt's simplification process shown in the examples above are parallel with those of his simplification in his revisions of Weber and Schubert's works around the same time that the arrangements of Weber's overtures were composed and released. In the first movement of Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy*, for example, the "notoriously awkward" sixteenth-note octave eighth notes as illustrated in Example 5.8 are simplified into triplets in Liszt's version (the small notes indicate Liszt's version).<sup>36</sup>

Example 5.8. Liszt's version of Schubert's *Wanderer Fantasy*, mm. 174–75



<sup>35</sup> The instances of simplification in the Weber overture arrangements include Weber–Liszt, *Jubilee*, from m. 76 and the *ossia* from m. 194; *Freischütz*, mm. 81–82, 280–81, 296, 298, 301 (in *ossia*); and *Oberon*, from m. 117.

<sup>36</sup> Noted in Hamilton, *After The Golden Age: Romantic Pianism and Modern Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 267.

Whereas Schubert's octave passages easily make the pianist's wrist stiff and thus are less idiomatic for the piano, Liszt's triplets resolve the problem by taking into account more practical and idiomatic writing for the keyboard. Kenneth Hamilton points out that Schubert's octaves, which were "only slightly approachable" on a piano of his time, were less generated from his attempts to expand his virtuosic language and more associated with a "technical miscalculation" on his part.<sup>37</sup> In this regard, Liszt's condensed version represents his attempts to "correct" the original "miscalculated" pianistic writing, suggesting a better solution in more practical and pianistic terms and thus fulfilling the demands of the desired tempo and the overall effect in execution. The same reasoning of this is applicable to his simplification in the arrangements of Weber's overtures, although in this case he does not seem to "correct" any awkward writing from the original but rather to heighten the original orchestral writing or to reconsider it in appropriate pianistic terms.

The simplification process for practical reasons is, however, less associated with Liszt's generation than with his successors in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in the field of piano transcriptions. For instance, Ferruccio Busoni, who represents one of the significant successors of Liszt in piano literature and advocated and cultivated piano transcriptions in the legacy of the master, often condensed the original drastically, as illustrated in his arrangement of Liszt's *Mephisto* Waltz No. 1 for orchestra by cutting the length, simplifying Lisztian virtuosic figurations to create more practical idioms, and redistributing the demanding passages between the hands for more speedy

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<sup>37</sup> Hamilton, *After The Golden Age*, 267, n. 20.

execution.<sup>38</sup> Busoni's simplification fulfills his own aesthetics underlying his piano transcriptions that emphasize clarity, rapidity, and conciseness.<sup>39</sup>

Yet in a broader context, the simplification process was necessary for pianist-composers of Busoni's time for three principal reasons: (1) the change of performance practice and interpretation that emphasized rapid playing throughout the piece at a steady tempo, (2) the advances that made the instrument heavier and thus required a lighter style, and (3) the change of the concert atmosphere, in which the length of concerts of Liszt's time was significantly reduced in modern concerts.<sup>40</sup> These changes in modern performance practice, instrument, and concert atmosphere are distant from Liszt's performances, which occurred on a lighter piano, at a moderate tempo, and in a greatly extended length of concert valued by his audience.<sup>41</sup> Although Liszt did not confine himself to the demands of modern performance practice, his consideration of more practical and idiomatic writing would have remained even on the piano of his era.

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<sup>38</sup> For example, Busoni drastically simplifies Liszt's sixteenth-note patterns into eighth-note octaves in the section "Molto vivace" (at the end of rehearsal Z of Liszt's score from m. 782). For another example, at Rehearsal No. D/mm. 840ff, Liszt's outpouring of brilliant arpeggios is eliminated in Busoni's version in order to continue his own pianistic technique of alternating hands for hammer effect (*martellato* style) as well as his pursuit of a drier sound than the original.

<sup>39</sup> Busoni, *The Essence*, 93–94; Erinn Elizabeth Knyt, "'How I Compose': Ferruccio Busoni's Views about Invention, Quotation, and the Compositional Process." *The Journal of Musicology* 27, no. 2 (spring 2010): 224–64, at 245. The example of Busoni's simplification is illustrated in the excerpt of the end of the variation 6 of his Paganini–Liszt etude in Busoni's autograph; see Knyt, op. cit., 250.

<sup>40</sup> Hamilton, *After The Golden Age*, 269–73.

<sup>41</sup> Moriz Rosenthal reported in 1924 that Liszt used to perform at a more moderate speed than the speedy playing of our modern concerts; indeed, he had "marveled" at Rosenthal's rapid execution of the Champagne Aria from *Réminiscences de Don Juan*. Rosenthal, "If Franz Liszt Should Come Back Again," *The Etude* (April, 1924): 223; also discussed in Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, 270.

## Notational Issues

### *The absence of the detailed cues of instruments*

As mentioned earlier, Liszt's *partitions* of Weber's overtures are immediately distinguishable from the other *partitions* in the absence of the meticulous designations of instruments throughout the entire group. In the earlier *partitions* of Berlioz and Beethoven's orchestral compositions, the specific cues of instruments had been effectively used to elucidate Liszt's scrupulous approach to the original, to compensate for the limitation of transferring instrumental colors into the piano score, and to guide the pianist or reader to project the essence of the original score. The detailed instrumental cues also helped to identify the "*partition*," which term denotes an arrangement of a large-scale orchestral composition with scrupulous attention to detail.

That the particular notational device completely disappears in the Weber–Liszt *partitions*, therefore, seems to be beyond a perfunctory matter of notation, inviting further questions. Did Liszt become less attentive to informing the reader of the details of the original by the time he undertook his arrangements of Weber's orchestral music as the final group of *partitions*? In other words, did Liszt change his attitude toward his later *partitions*, just as the *partition* of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* Overture already drastically decreased the amount of the specific cues to several distinctive instruments? Or, does his designation of "*partition*" in his arrangements of Rossini and Weber's music set them apart from his earlier notion of "*partition*" when he embarked on his arrangements of Berlioz and Beethoven's symphonies, which he regarded as "sacred texts," as expressed earlier in his letter to Adolphe Pietet (1838)? Here the genre of the symphony is closely related to Liszt's notion of the *partition* but less associated with the issue of specific cues



of instruments, because the notational device had continued to be used in the arrangements of Berlioz's three overtures, as discussed earlier.

No documentary sources elucidate these questions, but it is worth contextualizing the usage of this particular notational device in the spectrum of Liszt's orchestral arrangements. After his earlier Berlioz and Beethoven *partitions*, he continued to deploy the device in his later arrangements of Beethoven symphonies: the Ninth Symphony for two pianos in 1851 and the remaining symphonies for solo piano in 1863 (Nos. 1–4, 8, and 9, incorporating the 1841 *partition* of the “Marcia funebre” movement from No. 3). Thus, the device did not entirely disappear by the time he undertook the arrangements of Weber's overtures in the 1840s. Nor can we claim that there was a tendency to decrease the device as the *partitions* of Berlioz, Beethoven, Rossini, and Weber progressed, because again, it was resuscitated in the later arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies and later revisions of the arrangement of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. Yet at the same time, it is true that, except for the revisit to Berlioz and Beethoven, the device is completely absent in the remaining arrangements for solo piano of orchestral compositions from Liszt's Weimar years on: that is, the arrangements of Wagner, Mendelssohn, and Meyerbeer written from 1848 to 1865 (this repertoire will be discussed in Chapter 6). Therefore, Liszt seems to show his extraordinary care with the device consistently in the particular group of arrangements of Berlioz and Beethoven's orchestral compositions, which are denoted specifically as “*partition*,” whether they were written in the 1830s or in the 1850s and 1860s or whether they were intended for solo piano or two pianos. This also indicates that Liszt's care with the device excluded his other arrangements of Berlioz and Beethoven's orchestral compositions such as those of

the *Marche des pèlerins* from Berlioz's *Harold en Italie* (1836), the *Danse des sylphes* from Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* (1846), as well as *Capriccio alla turca sur des motifs de Beethoven* (1846).

Yet in his arrangements for two pianos, Liszt's application of specific cues for instruments is not confined to the arrangement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony (1851) but extends to those of his own twelve symphonic poems from 1852 on, although the device is more prominently used in the former. Liszt's two-piano arrangements of his symphonic poems follow the path of the "strict" arrangement forged by the two-piano version of Beethoven's Ninth in the oeuvre of his two-piano and four-hand arrangements (which are discussed in Chapter 6). Thus, Liszt seems to regard his two-piano arrangements of his own symphonic poems as a "*partition*"-type of arrangement like that of Beethoven's Ninth, simultaneously attempting to align his own symphonic compositions with those of Beethoven.

Then should we still call Liszt's arrangements of Weber's overtures *partitions*? Although the absence of the detailed cues for instruments removes one of the essential elements that characterize his concept of *partition*, in his catalogue of 1877 Liszt still classified his arrangements of orchestral music by Weber into a group of *partitions*, suggesting that he continued to conceive of them as his *partitions*. Moreover, his faithful approach to the original remains intact in his arrangements of Weber's music, as required in the concept of *partition* itself. The disappearance of the instrumental cues thus serves as one of the characteristic elements in his approach to notation in his Weber *partitions*, not separating this *partition* from others but distinguishing it from them. The following

discussions continue another aspect of his unusual attention to notation: his particular fingering.

### *Meticulous fingering*

It is intriguing that another notational device is more prominent in the Weber–Liszt *partitions* than any other *partition*: that is, meticulous fingering. Finger technique is, in fact, what Liszt had emphasized in his teaching from his early period on, as in his lessons given to Valérie during the year 1832: “he [Liszt] stressed the great need of flexing and relaxing the fingers in all directions by multiple exercises for at least three hours a day.”<sup>42</sup> It is not surprising to see Liszt’s utmost care about specific fingering, which served as an integral part of his virtuosic performance markings throughout his piano oeuvre. His fascination with fingering has been interpreted with respect to its various purposes, effects, and examples. Dana Gooley regarded it as an essential part of the density and richness of Liszt’s performance indications, which represent one of his virtuosic performing and compositional styles.<sup>43</sup> David Trippett points out that Liszt never confines his fingering to that of the mechanical virtuoso, but uses the fingers’ physical movement to assist in developing his compositional ideas and ultimately softening the boundary between the physical and the mental process in composing music.<sup>44</sup> For Alexander Rehding, the fingering is critical not only to mark “traces of pianistic performance” but also to create the desired effect for which Liszt aimed, as illustrated in Liszt’s rendering of the famous violin descant in the pilgrims’ theme of the *Tannhäuser*

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<sup>42</sup> Mach, *The Liszt Studies*, xvii, Lesson 15, on 14 February 1832; see also Lessons 16, 21, and 24.

<sup>43</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 37.

<sup>44</sup> Trippett, “*Après une Lecture de Liszt*,” 54.

overture.<sup>45</sup> Charles Rosen argues that the novelties of Liszt's fingering probably stem from his attempts to reconceive the execution in an unprecedented dramatic level.<sup>46</sup> For instance, Liszt's new fingering in the process of his revisions of *Mazeppa* helps define the character of the piece or the melody and creating a new conception of keyboard sound.<sup>47</sup> In this regard, Rosen admonishes the pianist to adhere strictly to Liszt's fingering for realizing his intentions, even though the fingering may generate strain on wrist and arm in execution.<sup>48</sup> The discussion of Liszt's fingering also takes various forms in relation to the effect generated from Liszt's exploitation of his fingering in actual performance, eliciting not only mechanical but visceral and corporeal effects and inviting astonishment from the audience.<sup>49</sup>

For his arrangements for piano, Liszt himself states that his use of fingering was indebted to Ignaz Moscheles:

As to Mr. Moscheles, I hope he will not disapprove of my having followed his example in putting a profuse fingering for the greater ease of the mass of performers; but perhaps he would be so kind as to suggest a better fingering himself, and to let me know his observations upon such and such an artifice of "piano arrangement" of which he is a consummate master.<sup>50</sup>

Although his humble gesture toward his colleague led him to express that he was following the practice of fingering as a pedagogical tool for pianists, Liszt's fingering

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<sup>45</sup> Rehding, "Sounding Souvenirs," in *Music and Monumentality*, 87.

<sup>46</sup> Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 497–98.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. Rosen provides a particular example of the new obbligato melody added to the earlier version of the etude *Mazeppa*, which features two fingers hammering out in the demanding consecutive fingering 2–4, 2–4, 2–4 instead of the alternation of 2–4 and 1–3

<sup>48</sup> Rosen, *The Romantic Generation*, 498.

<sup>49</sup> Numerous accounts in Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*; see particularly Gooley's discussion of "Liszt's orchestrality," 35–52; Kramer, "Franz Liszt and the Virtuoso Public Sphere," in *Musical Meaning*, 68–99; Blasis, "The Mechanics of Sensation," 3–24.

<sup>50</sup> Ralph Hill, *Liszt* (New York: A.A. Wyn, 1949), 58; also cited in Hughes, "Franz Liszt," 10. This statement is part of the letter to Breitkopf & Härtel, which includes Liszt's purpose in having instrumental designations (see Chapter 1).

throughout his *partitions* reflects his painstaking endeavor to capture the essence of the original as much as possible. Fingering was an integral part of Liszt's constant revisions when he revisited his earlier arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies in 1863, as evident in one piece of correspondence with Breitkopf and Härtel during the year: "I shall probably change, facilitate, and emend many a thing in [the original transcription], and add a few fingerings."<sup>51</sup> In his assessment of Liszt's *partition* of Beethoven's Fifth symphony, as discussed earlier in Chapter 2, Fink found Liszt's specific fingering as "extremely desirable" and beneficial for experienced pianists to learn "efficient rules" of the device.<sup>52</sup> More importantly, Fink stresses Liszt's detailed fingering not only to prove the arranger's considerable mastery of the pianoforte but also to validate the arranger's "careful diligence" in his transferral.<sup>53</sup>

In the case of the Weber–Liszt arrangements, the meticulous fingering is used for various purposes, as illustrated in Examples 5.9–5.10 below.

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<sup>51</sup> La Mara, *Briefe*, II, 36; *NLA*, Ser. II, 17-19, xiv.

<sup>52</sup> Fink, "Pianoforte-Werke von Franz Liszt," 307.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

Example 5.9a. Weber, *Der Freischütz* Overture, mm. 269–71

Example 5.9b. *Der Freischütz* Overture, mm. 269–71, Liszt arrangement

As in Examples 5.9a and 5.9b, the passage at m. 269 presents Liszt's rendering of the tremolos of the two violins on D and C, respectively, while the viola's tremolo on G is merged into the sustained note in the left hand. Liszt deployed neither simply the conventional tremolo of C–D nor the repeated hammering chord of the simultaneous C–D; the latter, in particular, would have sounded unidiomatic for the piano and also might have generated stiffness in the wrist in being executed in the midst of a *pp* passage. Instead, Liszt's rendering aided by the specific fingering creates a sophisticated level of sonority and execution. His meticulous fingering results in alternating fingers for both

notes, 2–1–2–1 for the C and 4–3–4–3 for the D. The result of this rendering creates the character of two repeating notes, each separately articulated. Behind Liszt’s fingering thus lies his attempts to recreate an impression of orchestra, in which one part repeats on C and the other on D, each articulating individual notes with greater clarity, precision, and delicacy.

In addition, the passage above in the original orchestral score indeed serves as an intense moment through its reduced scoring, its *pianissimo* dynamic, and the following silence, all of which are immediately juxtaposed with the suddenly massive *tutti* of the C-major coda that follows. Liszt’s meticulous fingering that articulates individual notes with greater precision shifts the listener’s attention immediately to the intense moment and ultimately heightens the dramatic contrast in what follows.

The subsequent examples demonstrate how Liszt’s fingering helps to clarify the original melodic line in the midst of his transformation of the original.

Example 5.10a. Weber, *Oberon* Overture, mm. 201–4, only strings

The image shows a musical score for strings, specifically measures 201–4 of Weber's *Oberon* Overture. The score is written for Violin (Vn.), Viola (Va.), and Violoncello (Vc.). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The Violin part features a melodic line with slurs and accents, while the Viola and Violoncello parts provide harmonic support with sustained notes and rhythmic patterns. The notation includes various musical symbols such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

Example 5.10b. *Oberon* Overture, mm. 201–4, Liszt arrangement



In m. 203 of Example 5.10b, the sixteenth-note figuration in the middle register belongs to the melodic line of Weber. It is clearly articulated in Liszt's version with the consecutive succession of the fingering 1–2–3–2, while the octave doubling on every first beat and the heavy bass chords thicken the texture. The octave doubling is what requires the thumb on the beat, despite the clumsy crossing of 2 over 1.

Prior to m. 203, Liszt's rendering is a radical change from Weber's version. He transforms Weber's thematic line in sixteenth-note figuration into his own bravura pianistic figuration consisting of a series of broken-tenth leaps. It is noteworthy that Liszt's version reverses the effect of the original, so that C# is heard before E and so forth in each pair, eliminating the double-striking of each note in the arpeggiation. It is also important to note that this passage is not transitional but thematically important, and thus provides a counterexample to Liszt's reworking centered on transitional passages.<sup>54</sup> It is also a crucial example of Weber's dramatic orchestral writing by sweeping string arpeggiation. For Liszt, this moment probably provided a place where he reinforced Weber's dramatic writing and at the same time extended it to his own version. Liszt attempts to preserve the clarity of the original theme, in keeping with the concept of the

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<sup>54</sup> One of the main arguments throughout Kregor's book *Liszt as Transcriber* is that Liszt's unique moments are focused on transitional passages.



*partition*, as his fingering helps to articulate the melodic line clearly in the midst of his unique pianistic rendering. His fingering thus serves as a useful means to fulfill the dual demands of fidelity and freedom at the same time.<sup>55</sup>

What is common in Examples 5.9–5.10, as discussed above, is that the excerpts demonstrate Weber’s attentive approach to the strings with greater specificity and sensitivity than to the winds; moreover, his string writing requires rapid movement. Liszt’s specific fingering in turn helps heighten Weber’s string writing by providing his own articulation for the string figuration. His careful fingering, therefore, not only provides guidance for the pianist to facilitate playing, as pianist-arrangers of the time often aimed for in their additions, but more importantly, represents his faithful response to the original composer’s intent, his attempts to underscore it, and his own suggestions of articulation appropriate for a new medium.

## Conclusion

The examples from the Liszt–Weber *partitions* have focused on Liszt’s pianistic amplification and simplification of the original as two characteristic elements in his reworking. Behind his amplification and simplification, which contrast with each other on the surface, lies a common aesthetic underpinning: the fidelity–creativity dynamic. His amplification in his rendering of *God Save The King* from Weber’s *Jubilee* (Example 5.1) illustrates him faithfully capturing the relentless string scale of the original, at the same time reinvigorating it in his highly virtuosic piano idiom. Moreover, he astutely

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<sup>55</sup> Similar examples are present in the *Oberon* arrangement, mm. 35–37 and 116–18. Liszt’s specific fingering on the sixteenth-note figuration again elucidates the thematic line of the original in juxtaposition with his reworking, assisting the listener or performer to follow the original score.

selects different kinds of virtuosic figurations and makes them shift constantly, fulfilling the dual demands of sustaining the intensity of the consistent string scale and dazzling the audience. His amplification is also evident in his effective use of bass figures, helping to heighten the dramatic representation of Weber's *Der Freischütz*. The diatonic, resonant arpeggio bass for Agathe's realm contrasts with the chromatic, rumbling bass for Samiel's (Examples 5.3 and 5.4). Liszt thus preserves the essence of the contrasting musical language used for the contrasting forces in Weber's music, yet makes it more memorable in his piano idiom, particularly his careful selections of sonorous bass figures. Hanska's account of Liszt's playing of the "rumbling" bass, in particular, offers insight into the virtuoso's rendering of the difficult *ossia* instead of his more faithful rendering underneath, conveying his expansion of the sonorous potential of the piano, and most of all, his visual spectacle.

Towards the other end of the spectrum of reworkings, a simplification of the original appears more prominently than in his other *partitions*, suggesting one of the distinctive elements in his reworkings of Weber's overtures. This simplification continues the common aesthetic underpinning of the fidelity–creativity dynamic. The excerpts related to his simplification process have demonstrated that he deliberately avoids a literal rendering of the original, particularly the consistent and rapid string writing, instead suggesting more effective pianistic solutions for conveying the dramatic effect and forceful direction of the original (Examples 5.5–5.7). His simplification thus ironically becomes his amplification of a significant feature of the original. His simplification process is ostensibly contradictory to the meticulous approach that the *partition* by itself claims, but on a deeper level demonstrates his effective use of pianistic

idioms to render the intense, dramatic orchestral writing. When he takes the rapid string writing literally, on the other hand, his meticulous fingering helps articulate the melodic line clearly (Examples 5.9–5.10). In this case, his fingering is not just a perfunctory tool to guide pianists but reflects his adherence to the original motivating his careful inscription on his score.

The investigation of the Liszt–Weber *partitions* concludes Part I, which comprises five chapters devoted to his *partitions*. In Chapter 1, we explored the concept of *partition* as challenging and problematic, requiring this arranger’s scrupulous attention to the original in exceptional detail and at the same time his creative reworkings that offer convincing solutions idiomatic to the new medium. His meticulous notation studied as part of Chapter 1 demonstrates his attentive approach to individual instruments, explicitly through his detailed cues, and at the same time his interpretations of nuances and articulations of the instruments in his pianistic considerations. The dual demands of faithfulness and creativity, which arise in the concept of *partition*, set the stage for understanding Liszt’s transferral and reworking methods throughout his *partitions* in the subsequent chapters.

In Chapters 2 and 3, Liszt’s renderings of orchestral music by Beethoven and Berlioz represent the pinnacle of his faithfulness in accord with his notion of *partitions* of “sacred texts.” His attempts to render the original down to the smallest detail on his piano score are, however, interdependent with his creative solutions to delineate intricate orchestral textures and emulate the particular effects and sounds of the instruments. The contemporary assessment of Liszt’s rendering also helps characterize his act of arranging: in the case of his Beethoven *partitions*, his fidelity to the original is praiseworthy, as

appropriate for a genuine interpreter of Beethoven's music, simultaneously making his *partition* difficult and exclusive because of its exceptional detail and demands. For Liszt's Berlioz *partitions*, both Berlioz and Schumann recommend Liszt as faithful to the original composer's intent and at the same time recognize his skill in making the original aptly idiomatic in the new medium, ultimately praising the arranger's capability to do both in his renderings.

In Chapters 4 and 5, Liszt's *partitions* of "reassessing" reorient our focus on the arranger's meticulousness toward a more liberal, individual approach to the *partition*. In his reworking of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* overture, Liszt imbues the pastoral middle section with techniques related to his song transcriptions of the time as well as the performance style of Rossini's aria, including an increasing enrichment of the texture as well as free, improvisatory passagework, taking the audience into the realm of the embellished aria in the midst of the overall faithful rendering. His rendering of Weber's overtures, as just discussed above, immediately diverges from the previous *partitions* because of the complete absence of the detailed cues for instruments; moreover, his use of dynamics for amplification and simplification in his reworking makes these *partitions* distinguishable from the others. What is common to these *partitions* of Rossini and Weber, nevertheless, is the presence of faithfulness and creativity as two sides of the same coin in Liszt's renderings, as in the previous *partitions*. The subsequent chapters of Part II, which shift our focus from his *partitions* during his virtuoso years to his two-piano arrangements of his Weimar years, further illustrate the fidelity–creativity dynamic in his reworkings, yet show how a new direction arose from the new medium of two pianos.

## Part II

### Liszt's Two-Piano Arrangements of his Symphonic Poems and Symphonies with Chorus in his Weimar Years

Liszt's numerous arrangements of orchestral music for solo piano during his virtuoso years of the 1830s and 1840s are represented primarily in his *partitions*. These *partitions* during his Weimar years from 1848 to 1861 were, however, drastically reduced to three: based on Liszt's catalogue of 1877, the Overture to *Tannhäuser* (1848), *Danse des sylphes de la Damnation de Faust* (1860), and *Marche au supplice de la Symphonie fantastique* (1865).<sup>1</sup> *Marche au supplice* is, nevertheless, a reworking of his previous *partition* with his own addition of an introduction and modifications of the earlier structure in several places, and thus is considered a paraphrase.<sup>2</sup> Liszt's rendering of a short excerpt, *Danse des sylphes*, also features his own introductory material based on the main motives of the original, while the remaining parts preserve the structure of the model with a focus on the strings. The well-known arrangement of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* overture follows the structure of the original faithfully, with minor textural changes, as included in the *partitions*, yet it was designated as a "concert paraphrase" in the first editions.<sup>3</sup> The structural fidelity aligns the *Tannhäuser* overture arrangement

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<sup>1</sup> This decrease in the solo-piano arrangements is not confined to the oeuvre of faithful orchestral arrangements, but also applies to the freer ones of the opera fantasies or paraphrases. In the realm of his two-piano arrangements, Liszt continued his faithful approach to Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 (1851). The compositions included in Liszt's *partitions* in his catalogue were noted in the Introduction and Chapter 1.

<sup>2</sup> *NLA* Book 16, xii. The arrangement was published as a separate edition in 1834 and 1838, and reworked in 1865 (published 1866).

<sup>3</sup> For a discussion of Liszt's fidelity to the original structure, see *NLA*, Book 23, xv; Rehding, *Musical Monumentality*, 87. Charles Suttoni, "Introduction," in *The Complete Piano Transcriptions from Wagnerian Operas*, ed. Konstantin Sorokin (New York: Dover, 1981), iii, provides the information that

with his earlier *partitions*, but at the same time the designation of concert paraphrase relates the arrangement to his other concert paraphrases of orchestral music written around the same time, including the one of the Wedding March and Fairies' Dance from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1849–50).<sup>4</sup>

It is not surprising that the diminished number of arrangements relates chiefly to Liszt's changes in biographical circumstances from a traveling virtuoso pianist to a "serious" composer when he reigned as Kapellmeister at the Grand-Ducal court in Weimar from 1848 to 1861. The years at Weimar are generally considered the most compositionally productive of Liszt's life. He composed not only two of his most famous piano compositions, the *Études d'exécution transcendante* and the Sonata in B Minor, but also nearly all his orchestral works, including twelve of his thirteen symphonic poems, and several sacred pieces, including works for organ and his *Messe de Gran*. As a music director and conductor, Liszt also promoted the new compositions of others, including Hector Berlioz and Richard Wagner; for Berlioz, in particular, he arranged three concerts of "Berlioz Weeks" to propagandize the composer's music, and he wrote a radiant essay on Berlioz's *Harold in Italy* for viola and orchestra.<sup>5</sup> The

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Liszt's version follows the original 1845 Overture but deviates from the revised "Paris" version that is usually performed today. While acknowledging the general tendency of Liszt's faithfulness, Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 179, urges us to see how Liszt's modifications—although there is a small number of them—as well as his own dramatic concept reinforce his presence rather than Wagner's, sometimes "competing" with Wagner and creating "distance" from him.

<sup>4</sup> The arrangement of the excerpts from Mendelssohn's *Midsummer Night's Dream* fits in the category of paraphrases, because it varies particular motives from the original, modifies the structure, and juxtaposes different motives simultaneously from disparate sections of the original. *NLA*, Book 9, xvi, points out that the title of the arrangement appears in the manner requested by Liszt in a letter to the publisher Breitkopf & Härtel dated February 1851.

<sup>5</sup> Franz Liszt, "Berlioz und seine Haroldsymphonie," *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 43 (1855): 32–35, 37–46, 49–55, 77–84, and 89–97. Liszt envisioned a "musical Weimar" that respected and studied music by his predecessors, the most representative being Beethoven, but at the same time "live[d] with the living" through the music of Wagner, Berlioz, Schumann, and others. See La Mara, *Letters*, 242, letter no. 137 to Baron, 21 May 1855; also for Liszt's lineage with Beethoven, Weber, and Berlioz, see Detlef Altenburg,

Weimar appointment with the Court Orchestra, most of all, provided Liszt a forum for presenting his own concept of program music through his own symphonic poems. In this Weimar climate, therefore, his keyboard compositions expanded in structure and scale, his aspiration for composing his own orchestral compositions became full-blown, and his career as a conductor promoted the orchestral music of both himself and others.

Ultimately, Liszt rendered his self-image, as Trippett aptly describes it, as a “metamorphosis from virtuoso-as-caterpillar to composer-as-butterfly” by proclaiming publicly his resignation as a professional virtuoso performer.<sup>6</sup>

A decisive shift of focus in Liszt’s activities to composer, conductor, and interpreter in the latter part of the 1840s has led scholars to interpret Liszt in his piano music from Weimar as having abandoned his earlier bravura pieces intended to showcase his technical prowess, and to focus on a new horizon of Liszt’s artistic development in his own symphonic poems.<sup>7</sup> In this context, it is natural to see that Liszt’s *partitions* disappear as an integral part of his dazzling performing repertoire. Yet intriguingly, his metamorphosis into a self-conscious composer does not seem to have reduced his earlier

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“Franz Liszt and the Legacy of the Classical Era,” *19th-Century Music* 18, no. 1 (1994): 46–63, particularly at 55. For a broader context of Liszt’s relationship with the classical German culture, as represented by Goethe and Schiller, see *Liszt und die Weimarer Klassik*, ed. Detlef Altenburg (Laaber: Laaber, 1997).

<sup>6</sup> Trippett, “*Après une Lecture de Liszt*,” 87. Liszt’s transformation of his career to a serious composer seems to have already happened prior to his moving to Weimar in his engagement with the Beethoven monument in Bonn in August 1845; according to Alexander Rehding, this was the historical moment at which the public transition between “virtuoso career” and “self-consciously great composer” took place. Rehding, “Liszt’s Musical Monuments,” *19th-Century Music* 26, no. 1 (Summer 2002): 56. This transition is intriguing because it precedes one of his earlier *partitions*, that of Weber’s *Jubel* overture written in 1846.

<sup>7</sup> See, among others, Walker, *Franz Liszt*, II, passim; Altenburg, “Legacy of the Classical Era,” 46–48. For Liszt’s retirement from his virtuoso concert life, Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 442, points out that the virtuoso expressed his intention of retiring from the concert scene as early as 1845. However, the previously scheduled concert engagements prohibited him from doing so. He announced his retirement as a concert pianist after a performance he gave in Elisabetgrad. Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 156–57, however, provides insight into Liszt’s metamorphosis into a “candidate for German national culture” already beginning in 1840–43 when he accepted a part-time appointment of Kapellmeister at the Weimar court.

interest in orchestral arrangements for keyboard, as evident in the technically and acoustically stunning one of Wagner's *Tannhäuser* overture. Despite the fact that the number of orchestral arrangements for solo piano sharply decreased, during the 1850s and early 1860s there is a noticeable increase in the number of four-hand and two-piano arrangements in Liszt's oeuvre. The majority of the arrangements are those of his own twelve symphonic poems as well as his two symphonies with chorus published between 1856 and 1862, as listed earlier in Table 2 in the Introduction and reproduced in Table 4.

Table 4. Liszt's Two-piano Arrangements of Orchestral Compositions at Weimar

Source composer	Composition	Date: composed/published
Beethoven	Ninth Symphony	1851/1853
Liszt's 12 symphonic poems		
	<i>Festklänge</i>	1853/1856
	<i>Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne</i>	1854–56/1857
	<i>Tasso</i>	1854–56/1857
	<i>Les Préludes</i>	?1855/1856
	<i>Orpheus</i>	1855–56/1856
	<i>Mazeppa</i>	1855/1857
	<i>Prometheus</i>	1855–56/1856–57
	<i>Héroïde funèbre</i>	1854–56/1856–57
	<i>Hungaria</i>	1855–56/1857
	<i>Die Ideale</i>	1855–56/1858
	<i>Hunnenschlacht</i>	1857–60/1861
	<i>Hamlet</i>	1858–60/1861
Liszt's symphonies with chorus		
	<i>Eine Faust-Symphonie</i>	1856/1862, rev. 1870
	<i>Eine Symphonie zu Dantes Divina Commedia</i>	1856–57/1858–59

The present discussion in Part II delves into the group of two-piano arrangements of Liszt's symphonic poems and symphonies with chorus. Part II consists of two chapters. The first chapter (Chapter 6) provides contextual dimensions for a fuller understanding of Liszt's two-piano arrangements. It first raises fundamental problems



pertaining to the study of two-piano and four-hand arrangements in the nineteenth century. The discussion includes general distinctions between Liszt's two-piano and four-hand arrangements with respect to recipients, function, and compositional approach. Setting the two-piano arrangements apart from the four-hand versions helps to validate the focus on the former in this study, because the former have more parallels with Liszt's earlier *partitions* with regard to their status as virtuosic arrangements. By shifting our focus from this broad background to the particular context of Liszt's arrangements, we are able to elucidate the distinctive position of Liszt's two-piano settings, delving into their own purposes and performance anecdotes.

The second chapter (Chapter 7), continuing the threads of my discussion of Liszt's earlier examples such as his *partitions*, is devoted to illustrating in detail Liszt's compositional methods in the transferring and reworking process. Beginning with addressing technical problems inherent in transferral for two pianos, the investigation of Liszt's transferral demonstrates both the continuity with what he had done before and the freshness of what he newly introduced into his two-piano settings within the scope of his orchestral arrangements. Specific instances of his reworkings focus on new types of technique that naturally emerge from the new medium of two pianos, including the distribution of the material and the effect achieved by the interaction between the two pianos. Those examples further demonstrate that his concept of transferral embraced fidelity and creativity as two sides of a single coin.

## Chapter 6

### Distinctive Position of Liszt's Two-piano Arrangements

#### Overview of Nineteenth-Century Four-Hand Arrangements

On the subject of four-hand and two-piano arrangements in the nineteenth century, the former has noticeably loomed large in the literature. The four-hand arrangement—that is, four hands on one keyboard—has received a significant amount of attention by scholars with respect to its function and reception in the nineteenth century. From the perspective of the cultural and social reception of the genre, Thomas Christensen offers a comprehensive and compelling discussion of four-hand arrangements in the context of Viennese “duet” culture.<sup>1</sup> Drawing on valuable contemporary critiques and reviews, Christensen investigates how the medium of four-hand arrangements played a significant role in representing a classical canon of orchestral and chamber works transcribed for home consumption, bringing the music intended for the public sphere to the domestic parlor, promoting a literate musical public, and functioning as useful preparation for concert attendance. In addition, it should be noted that Brahms was prolific as an assiduous arranger in arranging compositions by himself or others for four hands from 1859 to 1890, to which a fair amount of literature has been devoted.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription.”

<sup>2</sup> Goertzen, “Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms,” is a comprehensive study of Brahms’s arrangements of his own compositions and others’, the majority of which are four-hand arrangements. Robert Komaiko, “The Four-Hand Piano Arrangements of Brahms and their Role in the Nineteenth Century” (PhD diss., Northwestern University, 1975), provides useful anecdotal testimony about Brahms’s circle playing the repertoire. There are several other doctoral dissertations on the subject.

In contrast with four-hand arrangements, discussion of two-piano arrangements during Liszt's time has been limited.<sup>3</sup> The disproportion in the literature between the two groups of repertoire is partly because far fewer two-piano arrangements were published in comparison with those for solo piano and four hands throughout the nineteenth century, judging by the lists of compositions in *Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur* and supplements (1817–27, henceforth referred to as the *Handbuch*), edited by Carl Friedrich Whistling and Friedrich Hofmeister, as well as in further supplements published annually as *Monatsbericht* beginning in 1829.<sup>4</sup> Although the Whistling-Hofmeister inventory is “international in scope,” it relies heavily on the editions of German and Austrian publishers.<sup>5</sup> In addition, some of the entries contain errors, omissions, and inconsistency in multiple listings that make it difficult to assess the number of editions precisely.<sup>6</sup> Nevertheless, the inventory provides a useful starting point for the discussion of nineteenth-century piano arrangements in order to quantify the published editions for solo, two pianos, and four hands.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Among the limited literature on the subject, for the discussion in more detail of Liszt's arrangements, see Bertagnoli, “Transcribing *Prometheus*”; Klefstad, “Style and Technique” (both as cited in the Introduction). For Brahms's arrangements, see Goertzen, “Piano Transcriptions.”

<sup>4</sup> *Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur* and ten supplements (1817–1827), cited in the Introduction, include not only arrangements for solo piano, two pianos, and four-hands but also those for six and eight hands. Ratliff, “Introduction,” *Handbuch*, xiii, provides a chart of how the first edition of the *Handbuch* relates to the rest of the series.

<sup>5</sup> Ratliff, “Introduction,” *Handbuch*, iii–iv.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, iv–v.

<sup>7</sup> In *ibid.*, vi, Ratliff stresses that the *Handbuch* is valuable for verifying and establishing publications, particularly because of the dating of the editions. The *Handbuch* list is used in Christensen, “Four-hand Transcription,” Goertzen, “Piano Transcriptions,” and Klefstad, “Style and Technique.” For other useful sources of the database of piano arrangements, see Adolf Prosnitz, *Handbuch der Klavier-Literatur 1830 bis 1904* (Vienna: L. Doblinger, 1907), 15; Wilhelm Altman, *Verzeichnis von Werken für Klavier vier- und sechshändig sowie für zwei und mehr Klaviere* (Leipzig: Hofmeister, 1943), excerpted from the Hofmeister *Handbuch* through 1942; for Liszt, see also Humphrey Searle's catalogue in “Franz Liszt,” *Grove Music Online*.

The third edition of the *Handbuch* from 1844 to 1847, in particular, lists a startling amount of four-hand piano music—almost nine thousand publications—that appeared in Germany and its “neighboring lands.”<sup>8</sup> The prevailing duet culture indicates that the medium of four-hand settings offered a vehicle for amateurs and connoisseurs to replicate and repeat large-scale music such as operas and orchestral compositions to which they might otherwise not have had access.<sup>9</sup> By contrast, two-piano arrangements were not as popular or numerous as four-hand or solo arrangements.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, it is common knowledge that concertos arranged for two pianos were ubiquitous in the nineteenth-century performing venues, where an orchestra was not always available and thus the second piano took over the orchestral part.<sup>11</sup> Brahms, for example, offered his piano reductions of the orchestral accompaniments for his two concerti in order to facilitate rehearsal.<sup>12</sup> This practical purpose of the arrangement in the context of the performing practice of the time is not an important issue in the study. It is noteworthy, however, when considering that the concerto arrangements occupy a large proportion of the two-piano arrangements, that the portion of the repertoire of other orchestral and chamber arrangements for two pianos becomes much less in comparison with the four-hand arrangements.

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<sup>8</sup> Adolph Hofmeister, *Handbuch der musikalischen Literatur oder allgemeines systematisch-geordnetes verzeichniss der in Deutschland und in der angrenzenden Ländern gedruckten Musikalien*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Leipzig: Hofmeister, 1844), II, 71–120; Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription,” 257.

<sup>9</sup> Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription,” 256–57, 263. It is notable that in the large number of orchestral compositions arranged for four hands, Beethoven was the most representative, as all of his symphonies and overtures were arranged for the medium. Adolph Hofmeister, *Handbuch*, II, 72–74.

<sup>10</sup> Far fewer editions of two-piano arrangements appear in the list of *Handbuch*, 320–21, in comparison with those of four-hand ones, 321–37.

<sup>11</sup> For the chamber-setting performance practice of piano concertos, see Halina Goldberg, “Chamber Arrangements of Chopin’s Concert Works,” *Journal of Musicology* 19, no. 1 (winter 2002): 39–84.

<sup>12</sup> George S. Bozarth, ed., *The Brahms–Keller Correspondence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), xxxi, n. 24.

One of the primary reasons for the disparity between four-hand and two-piano arrangements emerges from the simple requirement that two pianos need to be present.<sup>13</sup> The four-hand arrangements are suitable for home music-making, where the piano became a fixture in many households of the time.<sup>14</sup> The two-piano arrangements, however, appealed less to the domestic sphere, where it was rare to have two pianos in the same home. Although two pianos appear on several occasions in the accounts of private concerts at salons, as we will see in the anecdotes of the performance of Liszt and his associates below, arrangements for two pianos were in general less pertinent to the province of house music in the first place.

Aside from the practical reason, the staggering number of publications of four-hand arrangements was essentially because they were intended for sale. The composers, pianists, and publishers all collaborated to bolster the “transcription trade,” in which it was common for publishers to release full scores and piano arrangements simultaneously; the latter were used to promote and advertise the music.<sup>15</sup> The goal of such a commercially stimulated product was to make it sellable through an emphasis on practicality, playability, and entertainment. Even in the case of Brahms’s arrangements, although they were cultivated by his circle of professional pianists such as Clara Schuman, the composer wished to reach a broad audience through the medium of the four-hand arrangement.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Noted in Goertzen, “Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms,” 12; Klefstad, “Style and Technique,” 2.

<sup>14</sup> For the piano as a fixture of musical life, see James Parakilas and Gretchen A. Wheelock, “1770s to 1820s: The Piano Revolution in the Age of Revolutions,” in *Piano Roles: A New History of the Piano*, ed. James Parakilas, E. Douglas Bomberger, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 64–109, particularly 78.

<sup>15</sup> Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription,” 267.

<sup>16</sup> Bozarth, *Keller–Brahms Correspondence*, xxxi.

To summarize the prevailing tendency in approaching nineteenth-century four-hand arrangements, the repertoire is set apart from other types of piano arrangements. The staggering number of publications, in conjunction with the primary function of mass circulation and home consumption, bears witness to the popularity of the repertoire. Although the four-hand setting was cultivated by professional composer–arrangers such as Brahms, it generally pertained to the domestic sphere, intended for amateurs and connoisseurs to become familiar with the latest music that was barely accessible to them, and pursuing technical ease and practical concerns in a democratic way.

### **Comparison of the Four-Hand and Two-Piano Arrangement**

Assessing the current views on four-hand arrangements in turn helps to set the stage for a distinction between them and the two-piano arrangements. The existing literature often sets out the essential characteristics of the four-hand arrangement, as discussed above, in order to distinguish them from the two-piano settings, although lacking sufficient detail. A number of scholars have routinely taken a general distinction between the two types as a starting point. Zsuzsanna Domokos acknowledges that four-hand arrangements were written in an easier manner because they were primarily intended for amateurs in the first place, whereas arrangements for two pianos were in the province of professional musicians, mostly characterized as sophisticated, and often performed in public.<sup>17</sup> Such a distinction is already inherent in the field of “piano duets,” which embrace not only arrangements but also individual compositions written for four hands or two pianos, as

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<sup>17</sup> Domokos, “Beethovens Symphonien,” 254; also see Loos, *Zur Klavierübertragung*, 29.

represented in Schubert's duets.<sup>18</sup> According to Frank Dawes's distinction, "the one-piano duet has the larger repertory, it has come to be regarded as a modest, essentially domestic branch of music compared with the more glamorous two-piano duet."<sup>19</sup> The "modest" characteristics of the one-piano duet probably resulted from the relatively cramped position of two pianists at one keyboard, because the position makes it difficult to display virtuosic elements within the limited range of keyboard available to each pianist.<sup>20</sup>

The differing compositional approach to four-hand and two-piano arrangements is indeed inherent in playing each type. Howard Ferguson discusses the technical problems intrinsic to four-hand performance, among them that it involves frequent hand positions that collide, overlap, and entwine.<sup>21</sup> Playing a four-hand version also requires a constant mental and muscular effort to render the various strands of the texture and maintain the dynamic balance between the two pianists, because each takes over only half of the music, which is different from solo pianists' capability to control all of the music themselves.<sup>22</sup> The technical demands stem in part from the physical proximity in the rendition of the four-hand version. By contrast, pianists playing two-piano music have essentially the position of a soloist.<sup>23</sup> The limited range assigned to each pianist in the four-hand performance, in turn, becomes a primary reason for the arranger to attempt more simplifications and compromises in his transferral. The simplification, despite its

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<sup>18</sup> For the examples of Schubert's duets, see Lubin, *The Piano Duet*, 55–71.

<sup>19</sup> Dawes, "Piano Duet," A similar claim is made by Lubin, *The Piano Duet*, 2.

<sup>20</sup> Dawes, "Piano Duet." Because of the bodily movement involved in piano duet performances, advice was given on the proper etiquette for playing, as illustrated in Charles Burney's advice on the performance of his own duet sonata in 1777, quoted in Lubin, *The Piano Duet*, 9–10; Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription," 293.

<sup>21</sup> Ferguson, "Technique," in *Keyboard Duets*, 27–39, particularly 30–31.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 30–31.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

appeal to mass consumption, was also targeted by contemporary critics for incompetence and superficiality.<sup>24</sup> The four-hand arrangement, confined to a modest range of virtuosity, thus becomes less technically demanding and sophisticated than the two-piano arrangement, which is more capable of exploring a wider range, a richer texture, and the fuller sound of the keyboard.

The discussions mentioned above recognize the distinction between the two types of arrangements with respect to the differing recipients, performing venues, and functions, which in turn led to a differing compositional approach to each type. There is, however, a misleading tendency in much of the current literature to collapse the distinction between the two groups in relation to their underlying purposes. A number of contemporary critiques and reviewers acknowledged several important purposes of four-hand arrangements. An anonymous review from 1842 of Schumann's four-hand transcription of his First Symphony, for instance, encapsulates those purposes:

If the complete understanding of larger and more important orchestral works comes only as a result of repeated performances, then piano transcriptions become more desirable the less frequently such works are presented to the ear in their original form. This is because the transcriptions offer an opportunity to become more familiar with form and content, to better follow the composer's intention, and to become better acquainted with the foreign and unfamiliar. . . . Usually the public has them to thank for the understanding of our greatest masterworks, and where, for example, the public listens attentively in a concert hall to a symphony of Beethoven, it can always be concluded that musical life in the home is directed toward this enjoyment of art.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> For instance, the reviewer Gustav Heuser expressed his strong dissatisfaction with the four-hand arrangement: "It is horrifying and worthy of the strongest censure how masterpieces have been arranged—particularly for four hands—with such ineptitude, superficiality, and disrespect." *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* 17, no. 52 (27 December 1842): 213, as cited and trans. in Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription," 269; for a different translation of the anecdote, see Arthur Loesser, *Men, Women, and Pianos: A Social History* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1954; reprint, New York: Dover, 1990), 362.

<sup>25</sup> *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 44 (December 28, 1842): 1047; quoted and trans. in Goertzen, "Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms," 5.



First, the reviewer recognized the contribution of the piano arrangement to the formation of a musical canon of classical masterworks that requires repetition in performance, because it was rare to have repeated performances of orchestral compositions. Second, the piano arrangement provided an educational and informative tool for both public and musicians to become acquainted with the original composition in detail. Another important role of the piano arrangement resides in the domestic sphere, where the genre brought musical life intended for the concert hall into the home, creating a richer musical climate.

The significant aspects of the “piano transcription” that the reviewer emphasized have been perpetuated in virtually every study of the nineteenth-century “piano transcription.” In short, a piano arrangement exists for dissemination, promotion, and education (as also discussed in the Introduction of this study). This reiterated tendency has viewed the piano arrangement as a schematic derivation of the model—which also implies its status as an insufficient offspring of the original—and thus posited its purpose of dissemination simply as a starting point. The primary goal of dissemination is true to a certain degree in the domain of the two-piano arrangement, because the repertoire, despite its close relationship with professionals, was primarily used for propagating orchestral music in the era when few orchestral performances were heard. Yet these broad purposes—which prize the status of the model composition—risk undervaluing the individuality of arrangers and the art of their work. More importantly, the purposes do not provide scope for different transferral techniques for different mediums, whether one keyboard for two hands, or four hands, or two keyboards. Valerie Goertzen’s studies of Brahms’s piano arrangements, for instance, despite her thorough examination of the

examples, embrace all of the composer's arrangements for four-hands, two pianos, and even solo piano, without any distinction among them.<sup>26</sup> This approach comes to neglect the composer-arranger's shrewd understanding of potential problems inherent in each different medium and his solutions to them. By reaching a tautological conclusion that is applicable to any type of piano arrangement, the prevailing assessment of the two-piano settings undermines the contextual dimensions of the arranger's particular attitude towards his or her act of arranging. It also fails to offer insight into potential properties available only on two keyboards, for which the arranger deploys different types of transferral methods, including interplay between the two pianos in the physical, visual, and aural dimension.

Against the backdrop of these widespread tendencies in approaching two-piano arrangements, Liszt's two-piano versions of his symphonic poems help to provide a particular context for the repertoire. Although Liszt's two-piano arrangements have several of the common characteristics associated with the two-piano arrangement, including its connections to professionals and its technical challenges, the following discussions offer more specific contexts of his arrangements with respect to their distinctive position, purposes, performances, and techniques.

### **The Distinctive Position of Liszt's Two-Piano Arrangements**

Before discussing the distinctive characteristics of Liszt's two-piano arrangements, it is important to note that his arrangements for both four hands and two pianos align themselves with the mainstream of the media of the time. As observed earlier in lists of

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<sup>26</sup> Goertzen, "Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms."

compositions in *Handbuch*, the disproportion between four-hand and two-piano arrangements is also true of Liszt. According to Humphrey Searle's catalogue, Liszt's sixty four-hand arrangements (composed from 1834 to 1883) outnumber his thirty two-piano arrangements (composed from 1834 to ?1884), yet the two-to-one ratio becomes greater because eight of the latter are concerto arrangements and arrangements for eight hands on two keyboards.<sup>27</sup>

Amidst the prevailing tendency, however, it should be underscored that two-piano arrangements, unlike the solo and four-hand arrangements, become more common during the last two decades of the nineteenth and early twentieth century.<sup>28</sup> Wilhelm Altman's catalogue, *Verzeichnis von Werken für Klavier*, excerpted from the Whistling–Hofmeister *Handbuch* through 1942, provides brief but useful information about two-piano arrangements of various genres as published particularly from the 1850s through the early 1940s.<sup>29</sup> Despite the low number of two-piano settings, there is an overall increase toward the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>30</sup> The repertoire reached a peak of production in the 1890s to 1910s, in which the two pianos were used primarily for orchestral music, mostly symphonies and symphonic poems—which are the main concern in the present study.<sup>31</sup>

In this context, Liszt's two-piano arrangements take a unique position at the forefront of new developments for the medium. While the majority of the orchestral

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<sup>27</sup> Humphrey Searle, catalogue, *Grove Music Online*; Watson, *Liszt*, 193–94.

<sup>28</sup> In this direction, Klefstad's document is weighted toward early twentieth-century arrangements for two pianos.

<sup>29</sup> Altman, *Verzeichnis*, 84–107.

<sup>30</sup> *Handbuch*, 320–21. It is also true that the number of four-hand arrangements increased toward the end of the century. *Handbuch* (1844), II, 71–120; see also Goertzen "Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms," 12.

<sup>31</sup> Altman, *Verzeichnis*, 84–107, particularly at 92–94.

arrangements are centered on the later decades from the 1890s to the 1910s, Liszt's arrangements are distinctively situated in the earliest stage of this repertoire, as his arrangement of Beethoven's Ninth was published in 1853 and those of his own twelve symphonic poems in 1856–61, not to mention his two symphonies with chorus, *Faust* (1862; rev. 1870–80) and *Dante* (1858–59).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, it should be noted that even in the golden age of the two-piano arrangement the number of two-piano publications is only one fourth that of the four-hand publications.<sup>33</sup> Liszt's oeuvre has a higher proportion: closer to one third. Therefore, the relatively copious output of Liszt's arrangements for two pianos in itself has an unusual meaning in this overall marginalized portion of the repertoire.

Moreover, the fact that Liszt arranged his own symphonic poems for the medium is significant in a particular context of the development of orchestral or symphonic arrangements. Prior to Liszt's orchestral arrangements, only a few editions for two pianos appeared.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, this situation was similarly extended to the period when Liszt undertook his own arrangements in the 1850s and 1860s as well as in the 1870s until the repertoire began to blossom in the 1880s.<sup>35</sup> It was Liszt's arrangements that stood out in the forefront of the orchestral arrangements for two pianos even before the genre embarked on its development in the 1860s.

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<sup>32</sup> All of the arrangements were published by Breitkopf & Härtel, except for the *Faust* arrangement by J. Schuberth. There is one more arrangement of symphonic compositions in Liszt's oeuvre in the list of Altman, *Verzeichnis*, 93: 2 *Episoden aus Lenaus Faust*: 1. *Der nächtliche Zug*, 2. *Der Tanz in der Dorfschenke* (Mephisto-Walzer), published in 1885 by J. Schuberth.

<sup>33</sup> Klefsch, "Style and Technique," 2.

<sup>34</sup> Altman, *Verzeichnis*, 92, lists Beethoven's symphonies Nos. 5 and 6 arranged by E. Naumann and published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1846 and 1847, respectively.

<sup>35</sup> Altman, *Verzeichnis*, 92.

Furthermore, Liszt's transferral technique moves forward by advocating fidelity to the original orchestral compositions—as proved in his earlier *partitions* and continued in his two-piano arrangements. Such a method was unusual prior to or during his time in the domain of two-piano arrangement; for instance, although Carl Czerny's two-piano versions of Beethoven's symphonies were regarded as strictly literal and faithful and thus “authentic” renderings, they were not as scrupulous as Liszt's. Saint-Saëns remarked on Czerny's renditions that they were intended for amateurs to become acquainted with the classical composers.<sup>36</sup> The lesser degree of detail of Czerny's version is probably because of this different purpose and recipient.

The development of a strictly “faithful” approach to the original in orchestral arrangements for two pianos relates once again to the period 1880s–1910s, as illustrated in a succession of examples arranged by Karl Grunsky and others.<sup>37</sup> Even in Grunsky's “faithful” rendering of Bruckner's symphony, his fidelity frequently involves separating and sharing orchestral parts between the two pianos in order to enable a difficult orchestral part to be executed comfortably.<sup>38</sup> The impulse behind Grunsky's faithfulness for the sake of practicality is to some degree different from Liszt being uncompromising with meticulous details and technical demands. Liszt's scrupulous two-piano arrangements, therefore, uncover his distinctive and progressive position in the spectrum of “faithful” orchestral arrangements for two pianos. It would not be overstating the case

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<sup>36</sup> Saint-Saëns initially used his notion of Czerny's renditions for his emphasis on the educational purpose of piano arrangements. Saint-Saëns, *Musical Memories*, trans. Edwin Gile Rich (Boston: Small, Maynard, 1919; reprinted New York: AMS Press, 1971), 193; cited in Domokos, “Beethovens Symphonien,” 256 and Loos, *Zur Klavierübertragung*, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Klefstad, “Style and Technique,” raises an issue of the gradual increase in fidelity in arrangements of symphonic compositions, focusing on those during the early twentieth century, which culminated in Karl Grunsky's arrangements of Bruckner's symphonies published in 1927.

<sup>38</sup> Klefstad, “Style and Technique,” 141, 146.

to say that Liszt ushered in a new method in the field of orchestral arrangements for two pianos in the mid-century by consistently advocating a conscientious approach to the original. Liszt's two-piano arrangements, in a word, were in the vanguard of technical and aesthetic development of the medium during the second half of the century.

## Purposes

Liszt outwardly expressed different attitudes toward the four-hand and two-piano settings of his symphonic poems. Several of his letters represent his differing approaches to the two types of arrangement, as illustrated by one dated 24 May 1856 to Louis Köhler, a piano pedagogue and critic with whom he continued to correspond during the 1850s:

At first I tried a four-hand arrangement of it [my symphonic poem], which would be more practical for *sales*. But I soon abandoned this mutilation when I realized that in the four-hand composition the intertwining of the hands [would] gets too much in the way of my tonal structure. The two-piano arrangement, if I am not wrong, sounds reasonable. Bülow, Bronsart, Pruckner, etc. have played it several times, and certainly you will find in Königsberg a partner whom you [could] induce [to play] it.<sup>39</sup>

Liszt made a distinction between the four-hand and the two-piano arrangement, regarding the former as “more practicable for *sales*” yet incapable of capturing his “tones,” while the latter, although it appears acceptable (“sounds reasonable”), relates to the province of advanced pianists.

Similarly, as stated in his letter of 1857 to Wladimir Stasoff in St. Petersburg, Liszt regarded his two-piano arrangements as having little to do with commerce but

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<sup>39</sup> La Mara, *Briefe*, I, 222–23. “Ich versuchte zuerst ein 4 händiges Arrangement davon, was für den Verschleiss weit praktischer wäre; gab aber diese Verstümmelung bald auf, indem ich einsah, dass bei dem 4 händigen Satz das Ineinandergreifen der Hände meinem Tongebilde zu sehr im Wege steht. Das 2 clavierige Arrangement, wenn ich nicht irre, klingt passabel. Bülow, Bronsart, Pruckner etc. haben es mehrmals gespielt, und sicher finden Sie in Königsberg einen Partner oder eine Partnerin, die Sie dazu verleiten.”

rather as appropriate for a few groups of competent pianists; moreover, he esteemed the two-piano versions that help preserve the essential elements of the original:

In addition, you will not be unaware that arrangements for two pianos—the only ones suitable for rendering the design and grouping of ideas of certain works—are little in favor among music sellers and sell poorly. The great mass of pianists are hardly capable of playing them on the piano, and care very little (if not sometimes for the genre and through fear of the judgement of others) about the interest of the mind and the emotions that could be related to the movements of their fingers.<sup>40</sup>

In the two letters above, Liszt not only establishes a distinction between four-hand and two-piano arrangement, “for *consumption*” or “unsaleable,” but also ultimately implies a hierarchy between the two. The two-piano version, because of its less-commercial orientation and fewer compromises in transferral, enabled the arranger to render the essence of the original orchestral composition more meticulously than its four-hand counterpart. Moreover, he suggests that his two-piano arrangement requires more than the capabilities of “the great mass of pianists.” From the outset, therefore, Liszt attempts to elevate the status of his two-piano arrangements to the level of virtuosic renderings unplayable by all but the most experienced pianists, ultimately aligning the repertoire with his earlier *partitions*.

In another letter to Köhler, dated 9 July 1856, Liszt expands the hierarchy between the two types of arrangements to three by including the solo-piano arrangement, the most representative type of his arrangements. For renderings of his own symphonic

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<sup>40</sup> La Mara, *Briefe*, I, 267–68. “En sus vous n’ignorez pas que les arrangements pour deux Pianos—les seuls propres à rendre le dessin et le groupement des idées de certains ouvrages—sont peu en faveur auprès des marchands de Musique et d’un débit rare, la grande masse des Pianistes étant à peine capable de jouer sur le Piano, et se souciant fort peu (si ce n’est parfois pour la forme et par respect humain) de l’intérêt d’intelligence et de sentiment qui pourrait se rattacher aux promenades de leurs doigts.” Wladimir Stasoff was a Russian writer, a music and art critic, then director of the Imperial Public Library at St. Petersburg.

poems, Liszt once again found his two-piano arrangements more effective for capturing his extensive orchestral writing than both the four-hand and the solo-piano version.

Such an adaptation [for two pianos] is certainly not as useable as a four-hand one. However, after I had tried to squeeze the score of the *Tasso* simply into *one* pianoforte, I soon gave up this plan for the other ones, on account of the unavoidable mutilation and adjustment through the intertwining playing of the four-hand composition. And I brought myself to do without sound and color and *orchestra light*, but at least I could determine an overall reduction of the musical content that was clear to the ear through the two-piano arrangement (which I could arrange quite freely).<sup>41</sup>

It is not unusual that the arranger-composer conceded the confinement (“mutilation and adjustment”) involved in transferral. Liszt had already experienced such limitations when he undertook his earlier orchestral arrangements for solo piano, as he expressed to Breitkopf & Härtel when he arranged a set of Beethoven’s symphonies (see Chapter 1). At the same time, Liszt’s convincing solutions prove that he is unique in this capacity. Despite his earlier accomplishments in solo-piano arrangements, it is notable that for his symphonic poems Liszt found such a setting inappropriate to encompass the score of the original (“squeeze the score of the *Tasso* poorly into *one* pianoforte”) and to approximate “*orchestral light*.” Here Liszt particularly points out the range and color as shortcomings in transferral. In fact, one of the common themes in the reception of Liszt’s symphonic poems was to remark on his advanced use of distinctive instrumental effects and an extensive range of orchestral texture.<sup>42</sup> In a broader context, it is natural to see that Liszt’s symphonic poems had been more developed with respect to the increasing

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<sup>41</sup> La Mara, *Briefe*, I, 224–25. “Ein derartiges Arrangement ist allerdings nicht so verwendbar als ein 4händiges. Jedoch nachdem ich versucht hatte, die Partitur des *Tasso* schlechtweg in *ein* Pianoforte hineinzuzwacken, gab ich bald dies Vorhaben für die übrigen auf, ob der unvermeidlichen Verstümmelungen und Einstellungen durch das *In-* und *Durcheinandergreifen* des 4 händigen Satzes, und bequeme mich dazu, zwar Klang und Farbe und *Orchester-Licht* zu entbehren, aber wenigstens eine übersichtliche und dem Ohr deutliche Wiedergebung des musikalischen Inhalts durch das 2clavierige Arrangement (welches ich ziemlich frei bearbeiten konnte) zu fixiren.”

<sup>42</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 83–138.



complexity of orchestral sound, texture, and effects than the previous orchestral music he arranged for solo piano.<sup>43</sup> In a particular context, Liszt's experimentation with orchestral effects was often used to heighten his programmatic concerns, which are in turn inextricably linked with his unique approach to musical structures in orchestral writing.<sup>44</sup> In both contexts of the overall advances in orchestral writing and Liszt's individuality in instrumental colors and range, he would have deemed the properties available on two pianos, including a wider scope of register and timbres, more effective than being limited to one keyboard. The two-piano arrangement would thus have fulfilled the requirement of the arranger's growing sensitivity to and interest in intricate orchestral textures and colors, ultimately leading Liszt to believe in "the two-piano arrangements (which I could arrange quite freely)."

Paul A. Bertagnolli investigates Liszt's contrasting approaches to his arrangements of his fifth symphonic poem, *Prometheus*, for the two media. His four-hand arrangement is rendered with more simplifications and more adjustments that are suitable for viability in the market, whereas his two-piano version attempts to retain the integrity of the orchestral score by more duplication and virtuosic renderings.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> For the general overview of advances and experimentation in nineteenth-century orchestration, see Julian Rushton, "The Art of Orchestration," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Orchestra* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), ed. Colin Lawson, 92–111; Robert Barclay, "The Development of Musical Instruments: National Trends and Musical Implications," in *CCO*, 22–41; Joan Peyser, ed., *The Orchestra: Origins and Transformations* (New York: Scribner, 1986); R. Larry Todd, "Orchestral Texture and The Art of Orchestration," in *The Orchestra: A Collection of 23 Essays on its Origins and Transformations* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2006), ed. Joan Peyser, 191–226, particularly at 209–19.

<sup>44</sup> For a brief overview of the debate on the relationship of program and structure in Liszt's symphonic poems, see Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 5–9. The inextricable relationships among Liszt's use of particular orchestral effects, programmatic references, and his two-piano rendering will be discussed through musical examples in Chapter 7.

<sup>45</sup> See specific examples in Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus," 139–47.

The case of the *Prometheus* arrangements can be extended to the impulse behind such a contrasting transferral in Liszt's remaining arrangements of his symphonic poems. Throughout his four-hand versions Liszt usually deploys more simplified, shortened, and less demanding figurations. For example, duplicated octave passages are replaced by simply alternating broken octaves; wider-range accompaniment patterns are reduced to a narrower range of contour; and rapid scales or repeated chords become simplified and less demanding. Whereas Liszt's four-hand arrangements are far less literal, faithful, and virtuosic than their two-piano counterparts, he paid greater attention to the details of the original in his two-piano arrangements. Such a meticulous approach to his symphonic poems represents the continuity of his earlier practice from his solo-piano arrangements. The common thread of techniques and aesthetics underlying both the solo and the two-piano arrangements bolsters the claim that Liszt's two-piano arrangements in his Weimar years can be understood as reflecting his constant fascination with the orchestral arrangements of what he had done earlier, yet in a different medium of two pianos and along with newly emerging compositional methods in accordance with the new medium, as will be fleshed out in the musical examples in Chapter 7.

Despite more fidelity to the original in the two-piano arrangement, Bertagnolli argues that Liszt's two primary concerns—to achieve a “serviceable” arrangement and to solve a “garbling” inherent in transferral—are maintained in both four-hand and two-piano versions. This argument, which relegates Liszt's two-piano version to the “serviceable,” becomes dubious, however, when considering his particular relationship with his two-piano arrangement with respect to their publication, performance anecdotes,

and most of all, links to his earlier virtuosic orchestral arrangements. By explaining these aspects, the following discussions further reveal the distinctive purposes of the medium.

The compositional and publication information of Liszt's two-piano arrangements is bound up with his priority for the medium over its four-hand counterparts, although the information is inconsistent for a few arrangements. The first letter to Köhler above outlines the sequence of Liszt's compositional process: first a four-hand version, which was then turned into a two-piano version ("I tried at first a four-hand arrangement of them [my symphonic poems]." Liszt's claim is also bolstered by the case of his arrangement of *Prometheus*, based on Bertagnolli's investigations of the manuscripts and published scores of the arrangement, which suggest that Liszt undertook the four-hand version first.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, Peter Raabe, the tenacious cataloguer of Liszt's oeuvre, argued the contrasting viewpoint that Liszt prepared the two-piano arrangements prior to the corresponding four-hand ones, based on the facts that the former continued to appear earlier than the latter in publication and that the composer himself preferred the former.<sup>47</sup>

In fact, the majority of Liszt's two-piano versions, ten out of the twelve, appeared simultaneously with the corresponding orchestral scores.<sup>48</sup> This was not untypical of the nineteenth-century "transcription trade," in which publishers, composers, and arrangers all collaborated to make it possible to release both orchestral and piano scores at the same time to facilitate the dissemination and promotion of the latest music, as mentioned

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<sup>46</sup> Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus," 136.

<sup>47</sup> Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus," 145; Peter Raabe, *Franz Liszt* (Tatting: H, Schneider, 1968), II, 289; also La Mara, *Briefe*, I, 222.

<sup>48</sup> Based on Searle's catalogue and Eckhardt and Mueller's "Franz Liszt: Liszt of Works," xii, the orchestral and two-piano scores of *Tasso*, *Les Préludes*, *Orpheus*, *Prometheus*, *Mazeppa*, and *Festklänge* appeared in 1856; both versions of *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* in 1857, *Die Ideale* in 1858, and *Hamlet* and *Hunnenschlacht* in 1861. In the case of *Héroïde funèbre* (1857), the two-piano version was issued beforehand in 1856. Only the two-piano arrangement of *Hungaria* (1861) had to be postponed until after the orchestral score (1857); also noted in Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus," 135.

earlier in Christensen's discussion of duet culture. Yet in the case of Liszt, it was a two-piano arrangement that consistently preceded its four-hand counterparts in both composition and publication, with a couple of exceptions such as *Prometheus*. Four-hand arrangements were mostly published much later than orchestral scores. For the record, although the earliest four-hand editions of the three symphonic poems *Tasso*, *Les Préludes*, and *Orpheus* appeared in 1859, three years after their orchestral and two-piano scores, the remaining nine editions were published sporadically in the span from 1861–1880.<sup>49</sup> More significantly, it was Liszt himself who arranged the entire set of his symphonic poems for two pianos, whereas he initially had his pupils and associates prepare a few of the four-hand arrangements.<sup>50</sup> Liszt's complete control over the set of his two-piano versions in the first stage, therefore, is distinguishable from his relatively loose attitude toward the four-hand versions, lending its unique voice to the whole body of his "piano arrangements" in his Weimar years.<sup>51</sup>

Liszt's immediate exposure of his two-piano arrangements to his acquaintances suggest that he gave a special role to the medium. Several accounts of his letters reveal that he even distributed the scores of his symphonic poems and two-piano arrangements

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<sup>49</sup> Based on Searle's catalogue, *Festklänge* (1861), *Prometheus* (1862), *Hamlet* (1874), *Mazeppa* (1875), *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* (1875), *Hungaria* (1875), *Hunnenschlacht* and *Héroïde funèbre* (1878), and *Die Ideale* (1880).

<sup>50</sup> Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus," 153, nn. 3 and 4, points out that Liszt originally planned to leave the task of three of the four-hand arrangements to his associates, including Hans von Bülow, to arrange *Héroïde funèbre* and *Hunnenschlacht*, although Bülow declined to do the task later, just as Giovanni Sgambati declined to transcribe *Die Ideale*. Eventually, Liszt himself arranged the former two later. See La Mara, ed., *Briefwechsel zwischen Franz Liszt und Hans von Bülow* (Leipzig, 1898), 389–93; Liszt's letter to Breitkopf & Härtel in La Mara, *Briefe*, II, 212, dated 24 November 1872.

<sup>51</sup> Liszt's control, nevertheless, extends to the four-hand arrangements by others before they appeared, as he was willing to correct the four-hand arrangement of *Die Ideale* by Sgambati. La Mara, *Briefe*, II, 212, dated 24 November 1872. Also, it should be noted that Liszt was the major composer who arranged his own symphonic poems, but his other contemporary pianist–arranger–composers also engaged with his symphonic poems by arranging them for two pianos. For instance, Carl Tausig rendered Liszt's *Prometheus* symphony in a two-piano version, see Walker, *Franz Liszt*, II, 181.

simultaneously to his associates; on some occasions, the two-piano version went out prior to the orchestral score. For instance, in his letter of 1857 to the wife of Wilhelm von Kaulbach, whose painting inspired Liszt's symphonic poem *Hunnenschlacht*, the composer sent her first his manuscript of the arrangement.<sup>52</sup> The composer seems to have been eager to acquaint his audience with his new music, which might otherwise have had to wait until a full orchestra was available for a public concert. The goal of self-promotion through the medium is certain, but crucial to Liszt's relationship with the medium is the fact that he sent his two-piano arrangement, not the four-hand version, promptly to his associates. The impulse is once again not only his belief in the medium of two pianos as the most effective means to convey the essence of his own orchestral compositions but also his attempts to ensure that his audience would obtain a fuller and richer comprehension of the original through the medium.

Through his two-piano settings Liszt was also able to respond to an impatient audience who were anxious to hear his latest music. Liszt's letter to Eduard Liszt in 1863 recounts his encounter with Princess Marcelline Czartoryska, who wished to get to know some of his symphonic poems and played two-piano arrangements together with the composer:

During her residence here she on several occasions expressed the wish to become acquainted with some of my compositions (to which, whether intentionally or not, she had hitherto not paid much attention). I played with her my arrangement of the Symphonic Poems for 2 pianofortes—the *Héroïde funèbre*, *Tasso*, and *Les Préludes*—which she received with kindly and courteous tolerance.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> La Mara, *Letters*, I, 338, a letter to Frau von Kaulbach, dated 1 May 1857. This letter will revisit below in the discussion of Liszt's rendering of *Hunnenschlacht*.

<sup>53</sup> La Mara, *Letters*, II, 48, dated 22 May 1863. According to Liszt's description, "Princess Cz.," a pupil of Chopin's, was an "enthusiastic worshipper of Mozart, Beethoven, and Chopin" and "the illuminating faith of the Catholic Church reflected in Polish blood."

From the perspective of contemporary critics, Liszt's two-piano arrangements furnished them with the means to assess the composer's mastery of orchestral effects in the midst of criticism of his ability to write a large-scale orchestral composition in a coherent manner. In the reception of Liszt's symphonic poems, Berlin critics such as Otto Lindner hardly recognized Liszt's unifying element, known today as "thematic transformation," but rather, condemned these compositions for a lack of internal logic, as opposed to the organically constructed structure achieved by past symphonic composers.<sup>54</sup> For Lindner, a piano reduction provided a vehicle to reveal Liszt's emptiness in structural coherence as opposed to his abundance of orchestral effects.<sup>55</sup> In responding to such an attack, Hans von Bronsart attempted to defend Liszt's symphonic poems through his analysis of 1856.<sup>56</sup> Bronsart referred to an anecdote about a two-piano performance of *Les Préludes* in Weimar, which a local critic praised: "If you think that Liszt can compose only for the piano, you should hear what he can do with an orchestra—then you'd understand."<sup>57</sup>

Although the exchange of critiques between Lindner and Bronsart is generally cited to represent two contrasting sides of the contemporary reception of Liszt's orchestral music, it offers an intriguing insight into a differing perception of a piano arrangement. Whereas Lindner regards it as a schema of an original orchestral composition and thus implies that the piano version is an essentially insufficient

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<sup>54</sup> Otto Lindner's two reviews of Liszt's concerts on 6 December 1855, published in *Vossische Zeitung* (8 December 1855), 1–2, 2–4, respectively; for the criticism on the thematic transformation, 2–4; discussed and cited in Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 92–94, particularly 94.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Hans von Bronsart, "Franz Liszt's *Torquato Tasso*," *Berliner Musik-Zeitung Echo* (27 January and 3 February 1856), A–D and 33–37; cited in Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 94.

<sup>57</sup> Bronsart, "Franz Liszt's *Torquato Tasso*." The date of the performance is not provided.

derivation from the model, Bronsart extends his appreciation of the medium, particularly through a two-piano arrangement, to the arranger's skills, which make it successful in retaining all the essential elements of the original. If Lindner insists on an antiquated view of a nineteenth-century piano arrangement simply as a reduction of the structure of a large-scale composition, Bronsart's appreciation suggests an attempt at reorientation towards a piano arrangement that extends beyond the reduction; moreover, it was Liszt's two-piano settings that critics such as Bronsart used to prove the composer's artistry in his orchestral writing.

Liszt's two-piano arrangements thus provided an effective vehicle to fulfill the demands not only of the composer himself but also of his audiences and critics. The performance anecdotes of his two-piano versions below help to confirm that his arrangements were received by professionals and regarded as independent concert pieces in their own right.

### **Performance Anecdotes**

It was primarily a group of professional pianists who cultivated Liszt's two-piano arrangements of his symphonic poems. Liszt himself was at the center of these renditions with his pupils. He was indeed known to perform his two-piano music with almost every significant pianist of his time.<sup>58</sup> The performances of his two-piano arrangements were favorably received by his contemporaries. Richard Pohl—a noted critic, supporter of the New German School, and probably an observer of the performances of Liszt's two-piano

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<sup>58</sup> Hinson, *Guide*, 78. The two-piano music here includes his piano concertos arranged for two pianos as well.

arrangements when he stayed in Weimar from 1854 to 1864—recalled one of the concerts he attended:

A further dimension was added to our enjoyment when Dionys Pruckner, one of Liszt's best pupils, took his place at a second grand piano standing next to the giant [Liszt] . . . in a performance of one of Liszt's symphonic poems (*Orpheus*) in the Master's own arrangement [S638]. Seek where you will to hear such a performance elsewhere!<sup>59</sup>

Moreover, Liszt himself described the two-piano performances of *Les Préludes* and *Tasso* in his letter to Princess Carolyne on 10 May 1866:

Rossini's matinée, with *Les Préludes* and *Tasso*—Planté was at the second piano—succeeded beyond my expectations. Little by little people seem to take on a certain opinion of my talent as composer—but we are still at the preliminaries. Last evening, we again played *Les Préludes* and *Tasso* with Planté at the home of Princess Marceline. She had gathered a carefully chosen group of twelve to hear these things. Tomorrow evening we will play the *Dante* [Symphony] with Saint-Saëns at Gustave Doré's. Saint-Saëns and Planté are passionate for my symphonic poems, which are secretly beginning to make their little way.<sup>60</sup>

Francis Planté and Camille Saint-Saëns were among the diligent pianists who promoted Liszt's symphonic poems by their performances of these arrangements. Saint-Saëns in fact played a crucial role in transforming the reception of Liszt's symphonic poems in Paris from controversial to more favorable.<sup>61</sup> Saint-Saëns also joined with Planté in a two-piano concert of Liszt's symphonic poems *Tasso* and *Héroïde funèbre* at

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<sup>59</sup> Richard Pohl, *Franz Liszt: Studien und Erinnerungen* (Leipzig: Bernhard Schlicke, 1883), 64; quoted in Williams, *Portrait*, 313.

<sup>60</sup> Pierre-Antoine Huré and Claude Knepeer, eds., *Franz Liszt. Correspondance: lettres choisies* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1987), 468; quoted and trans. in Lynne Johnson, "Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns: Friendship, Mutual Support, and Influence" (PhD diss., University of Hawaii at Manoa, 2009), 72. See also a partial version of the letter in a different translation in Williams, *Portrait*, 413.

<sup>61</sup> Johnson, "Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns," 195.



the Érards in the beginning of June 1867; in response to this concert, Liszt wrote a thank-you letter to each of the two pianists on 5 July 1867.<sup>62</sup>

Liszt's letter of 1866 above offers insight into the important functions of his two-piano arrangements in private gatherings. It was a two-piano arrangement through which Liszt and his collaborating pianists were able to render comprehensible performances of newly composed music available to a "carefully chosen group of twelve [in the audience]." Through the medium, Liszt's symphonic poems were "secretly beginning to make their little way" to forge his image as an orchestral composer. Although his symphonic poems were performed frequently by his own court orchestra and others, it was still rare to have such an orchestral composition repeated on the stage even in large cities of the time.<sup>63</sup> The private concert, therefore, was a desirable place to display of Liszt's orchestral compositions as piano arrangements; moreover, the composer himself came to the forefront of the performance once again as part of his self-promotion and propaganda for his latest music. His active engagement with the performance of his two-piano arrangements also reveals that although he had virtually retired from his virtuoso concert-pianist career, he never abandoned composing and performing his own arrangements during his Weimar years.

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<sup>62</sup> For the account of the concert, see Huré and Knepeer, ed., *Liszt. Correspondence*, 45; cited in Johnson, "Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns," 74. For Liszt's thank-you letter, see Williams, trans. and ed., *Franz Liszt: Selected Letters*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 984. A further recollection of Planté in his letter to Georges Servières: "Remaining very loyal to our friendship from childhood, we [Saint-Saëns and himself] got together often to play two-piano versions of Liszt's so beautiful [symphonic] poems, whether at la Muette, at Madame Érard's, [or] at the large and beautiful studio of Gustave Doré," quoted and trans. in Johnson, op., cit., 199.

<sup>63</sup> For the performance records, see Johns, "Performance and Reception of Liszt's Symphonic Poems in Europe and North America, 1849–61," in *Symphonic Poems*, 83–138; for early performances from 1849 to 1861, see 84–86, Table 5.

The private concert would have also provided a forum for the selected guests to discuss and evaluate Liszt's innovative symphonic poems through his two-piano versions, before or along with the actual concert performance. The performance of Liszt's *Hamlet* for two pianos in Károly Thern's home provides an anecdote to illustrate such a private concert as the forum to assess the newly composed orchestral music before it appeared in public:

In Károly Thern's home: apart from his friendly relations with the family, that is quite likely the reason Liszt was present there then to hear his rarely played *Hamlet* Symphonic Poem for two pianos and Károly Thern's transcription for two pianos of his great "Fantasy and Fugue on B-A-C-H," very well played by the Thern sons. These friendly gatherings in this kind of mutual music-making were in fact a form of lessons given by Liszt in the highest possible sense, for what was performed before him there could safely be played in public later.<sup>64</sup>

Thomas Christensen points out that it was not unusual in salons of the mid-nineteenth century for the latest orchestral compositions to be heard in four-hand versions before a concert performance; the practice, moreover, continued well into the early twentieth century, as illustrated in the musical activity of Schoenberg's circle, the Verein für musikalische Privataufführungen (Society for Private Musical Performances).<sup>65</sup> This situation of four-hand arrangements can be extended to the salon, as in Thern's home above, where two pianos were present. A discerning audience appreciated Liszt's progressive compositions and exchanged their views on them, and professional pianists were eager to learn and engage with Liszt's original orchestral compositions through his own pianistic renderings.

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<sup>64</sup> Dezső Legány, *Ferenc Liszt and His Country, 1869–1873* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1983), 222, does not provide a specific year and date for the concert, but probably it was held in 1872–73, judging by the author's chronological accounts.

<sup>65</sup> Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription," 263; Joan Allen Smith, *Schoenberg and His Circle: A Viennese Portrait* (New York: Schirmer, 1986), 84–85. See also Elliott Antokoletz, "A Survivor of the Vienna Schoenberg Circle: An Interview with Paul Pisk," *Tempo* 54, no. 3 (1985): 16.

Although Liszt's two-piano settings played a vital role in private concerts to promote, cultivate, and evaluate his symphonic poems, they simultaneously appeared in the public sphere as concert pieces preferred by professional pianists. According to *Fromme's musikalische Welt*, an annual periodical of musical concerts and events in Vienna, Liszt's two-piano arrangements of all but one of his twelve symphonic poems as well as of his two symphonies, the *Dante* and *Faust*, were performed in a series of three concerts by August Göllerich and August Stradal during winter 1886–87.<sup>66</sup>

The most representative examples of public appearances of Liszt's arrangements were probably the concert series in London during 1865–1887 arranged by Walter Bache. As one of Liszt's pupils and a prominent British pianist of the time, Bache organized the concert series to promote Liszt's compositions, particularly those for large-scale orchestra, when he returned to London after studying with Liszt for two years in Rome (1863–65).<sup>67</sup> One of Bache's strategies was to include the two-piano arrangements of Liszt's *Les Préludes*, *Die Ideale*, *Orpheus*, and *Mazeppa*, all of which took on great significance in programming.<sup>68</sup> This in turn helped the London audience to familiarize itself with these pieces, which had been rarely heard in the city, and thus advertise the

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<sup>66</sup> *Fromme's musikalische Welt*, ed. Carl Fromme (Vienna, 1888), 124; for other anecdotes that include Liszt's two-piano settings, see the issues (1878), 66, 98–99; (1879), 93; Goertzen, "Piano Transcriptions of Brahms," 12–14.

<sup>67</sup> Allis, "Promoting the Cause"; Bache, *Brother Musicians*.

<sup>68</sup> See Allis, "Promoting the Cause," 7; also for specific programming and anecdotes, see Allis's article throughout; Bache, *Brother Musicians*, particularly at 188, 190. Allis, "Reassessing the Pianism," 197, points out that Bache was not the only pianist in Britain to program Liszt's piano works, as many of Liszt's pupils included selections from his music in their recitals. But the variety of Liszt's works for solo piano, two pianos, and piano and orchestra, as well as the scope of the repertoire, are significant in Bache's concerts. For information on the arrangements performed by Bache and Edward George Dannreuther, another accomplished pianist and founder of the Wagner Society in 1872, see Jeremy Dibble, "Edward Dannreuther and the Orme Square Phenomenon," in *Music and British Culture, 1785–1914: Essays in Honour of Cyril Ehrlich*, ed. Christina Bashford and Leanne Langley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 275–98.

composer's orchestral compositions.<sup>69</sup> Although Liszt had connections with London audiences from 1840 to 1867 through his performances, his music appears scarcely to have been heard by audiences there.<sup>70</sup> The educational and informative purposes were thus the main goals of Bache's concerts from the outset.

Along with education and promotion as primary goals, to be sure, Bache's particular strategies in arranging Liszt's music call our attention. Bache deliberately introduced a two-piano version of the symphonic poem first and then its orchestral version.<sup>71</sup> If members of the London audience followed Bache's plan, it would have given them a foretaste of his new orchestral music. By hearing the original in the arrangement in advance, a cultivated listener would have been prepared to hear an original composition in performance. Conversely, along with a foretaste of the latest orchestral composition, the performance of two-piano arrangements at Bache's concerts would have helped the audience to refresh the original after a performance, ultimately prompting interest in the music and discussion of it. Robert Keller, Brahms's friend, noted that the piano arrangement helps the audience to be reminded of the rich colors of the orchestra that might have been missed during performance.<sup>72</sup> By using a typical nineteenth-century analogy of piano arrangements to drawings, Keller states its purpose as "to investigate the fine lines of the drawing while the magnificent color of the whole is still fresh in their minds and to delight in the abundance of attractive and ingenious details that are simply impossible to grasp in their entirety during the first exciting

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<sup>69</sup> Allis, "Promoting the Cause," 11.

<sup>70</sup> Liszt's performances include his playing of a "Hungarian March" as part of a Philharmonic Society concert in 1840 and *La Campanella* in 1867. Percy A. Scholes, *The Mirror of Music, 1844–1944; A Century of Musical Life in Britain as Reflected in the Pages of the "Musical Times"* (London: Novello & Oxford University Press, 1947), I, 426; Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 87.

<sup>71</sup> Allis, "Promoting the Cause," 11.

<sup>72</sup> Bozarth, ed., *Brahms–Keller Correspondence*, xxxi.

hearing of the original.”<sup>73</sup> The role of a piano arrangement after the performance was also evident in the case of the piano arrangements of Schubert’s B-Minor “Unfinished” Symphony by Carl Reinecke with Spina, which were published along with the orchestral score a year after its premiere on 8 December 1865; the arrangements contributed to the interest in and subsequent discussion of the music.<sup>74</sup>

The effects of the piano arrangement beforehand and afterwards serve as a reminder that Schumann heard and learned Liszt’s arrangement of Berlioz’s *Symphonie fantastique* prior to getting to know the original (see Chapter 3), and also that he incorporated his revisions progressively to his initial analysis, as his engagement with actual performances occurred. A similar line of reasoning probably lay behind Bache’s performances of Liszt’s symphonic poems for two pianos, which helped boost concert attendance and subsequent discussion of the music.

Bache clearly acknowledged Liszt’s original intent underlying his differing approach to his two-piano and four-hand settings in transferral. Bache was particularly aware that Liszt’s two-piano arrangements retain far more fidelity to the original than his four-piano versions. This is precisely the reason why Bache recommended Liszt’s two-piano arrangement of *Festklänge* instead of the corresponding four-hand one, as he overtly stated in the printed program of one of his London concert series on 25 February 1875, in which he believed that the faithful two-piano arrangement would help the audience become acquainted better with the details of the original:

To amateurs who may wish for a further acquaintance with the work, I would venture to recommend this arrangement in preference to the one

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<sup>73</sup> Bozarth, ed., *Brahms-Keller Correspondence*, xxxi.

<sup>74</sup> Maynard Solomon, “Schubert’s ‘Unfinished Symphony,’” *19th-Century Music* 21 (1997): 116–19.

(also transcribed by Liszt himself) for a single pianoforte *à quatre mains*. This latter version contains several material rhythmical changes which I cannot consider as improvements on the original edition, as performed to-night.<sup>75</sup>

To sum up Bache's concerts, what he attempted and achieved through his concert series is, on the surface, not different from the generally conceived function of nineteenth-century piano arrangements; the arrangement serves as a means to learn the latest music, to promote the original composer and composition, to prepare the public for the following concerts, to make critics and reviewers pay attention, and to prompt discussion afterwards. It is important to note, however, that Bache's concerts elevated the status of Liszt's two-piano arrangements of the symphonic poems to independent concert pieces in their own right and treated them as worthy of being repeated in performances during the composer's lifetime. Bache's concerts also helped to meet the composer's initial thoughts about two-piano arrangements pertaining to the sphere of professional pianists and being associated with a fuller understanding of the original with more detail. Bache's efforts also contribute to placing Liszt's two-piano settings within the momentum of the tradition of the composer's performance testimonies about his earlier virtuosic arrangements for solo piano.

## **Conclusion**

Liszt's two-piano arrangements of his own orchestral music, although neglected by scholarship, contribute a unique dimension to that medium, because of their distinctive position, purposes, techniques, and performances. First, the relatively large number and faithful approach help situate his arrangements at the forefront of the development of the

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<sup>75</sup> Cited in Allis, "Promoting the Cause," 11; original source not provided.

medium, which blossomed from the later decades of the century onwards. Second, Liszt showed a predilection for his two-piano arrangements over their four-hand counterparts. He regarded the former as more effective for capturing his extensive orchestral writing, asserted his control over them more in publication and composition records, and rendered them in a more faithful and virtuosic manner, aiming them at competent pianists and ultimately aligning them with his earlier *partitions*. Finally, Liszt's two-piano arrangements were received well by professional pianists, including his pupils such as Camille Saint-Saëns. In both private and public concerts, his arrangements provided a useful means for himself to promote his compositions, to assess his innovative orchestral writing, to motivate the public for his concerts, and to prompt further discussion by critics and reviewers. The public performances, most of all, helped create an atmosphere that of appreciation for his two-piano arrangements as independent concert pieces worthy of repeated performances.

Liszt's two-piano arrangements in his Weimar years continue the diligent project of his orchestral arrangements, as he had done earlier for solo piano, underscoring faithfulness and virtuosity. Yet the different medium of two pianos prompts him to explore different reworking methods. Chapter 7, which follows, therefore raises issues of problems inherent in the transferral of the two-piano arrangements, then look at his specific reworking methods through his full knowledge of the new medium.

## Chapter 7

### Liszt's Transferral and Reworking Process for Two Pianos

#### Issues In the Transferring Techniques Used In the Two-piano Arrangements

In comparison with solo-piano arrangements, there are advantages and disadvantages of two-piano arrangements, primarily because the additional piano is used. The surviving literature about nineteenth-century two-piano arrangements, scanty and cursory though it may be, has acknowledged what advantage the arranger could take of resources available on two keyboards largely in two respects: access to extended registers with further duplication of pitches and antiphonal writing through sharing material between the pianos.<sup>1</sup> The investigations of the examples of the medium, however, rarely cover the extent to which the arranger takes advantage of the two keyboards, and display little consideration of how the advantages are potentially detrimental to a successful two-piano setting.

It is true to a certain degree that the additional piano provides an opportunity for an arranger to explore a wider pitch range with more possibilities to transfer the orchestra score in a literal manner. Two-piano arrangements, exploring two keyboards, ostensibly provide more opportunities for a literal rendering than the solo-piano version. Therefore, the two-piano arrangement may give the impression of closer adherence to the details of the model than the solo-piano version does. However, if the literal rendering is consistent throughout, the score becomes denser, and the clarity of the original more opaque. As a

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<sup>1</sup> See for the first aspect, Goertzen, "Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms" and Bertagnolli, "Transcribing Prometheus"; for the second, Klefstad, "Style and Technique."



corollary, in such a transferral, the consequent sound can become more difficult to comprehend, and the execution more demanding. The purported advantages can therefore, ironically, also become a disadvantage. For this reason, the two-piano arrangement requires judicious selection and additions from the arranger.

Contemporary reviewers and critics in Liszt's time already expressed qualms about literal renderings. Carl Czerny was frequently ridiculed by critics who regarded his arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies as "too faithful."<sup>2</sup> Louis Köhler noted that Czerny "packed both hands full"; for Köhler, Czerny's rendering lent the impression of "a dance of leaping hands full of chords, in a manner that is absolutely impracticable," ultimately "falsely representing the orchestral effect" and thus not capable of presenting the essential character of the original.<sup>3</sup> Czerny was, in fact, regarded as the most representative figure in the field of arrangement prior to Liszt; moreover, his symphonic arrangements published by Albert Probst in 1829 were considered to retain the most faithful rendering of the original.<sup>4</sup> Liszt, who praised Czerny as the authentic interpreter of Beethoven, also played one of his teacher's two-piano arrangements of Beethoven's symphonies, that of the first movement of the Seventh Symphony, during a concert in April 1846.<sup>5</sup> In Köhler's criticism above, however, it is worth noting that faithfulness is

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<sup>2</sup> Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription," 269, n. 50.

<sup>3</sup> For the criticism by Louis Köhler, see *Dwight's Journal of Music* 4 (12 November 1853), 41; cited in Christensen, "Four-Hand Piano Transcription," 269. As a counterpart to Czerny's rendering, Christensen, 272–75, provides an example of Hugo Ulrich's arrangement of Beethoven's Symphony No. 1. Ulrich as a professional arranger of the time provides a model to make the arrangement more playable on the keyboard.

<sup>4</sup> Domokos, "Beethovens Symphonien," 255.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 255–56; for Liszt's praise, see his letter to Dionys Pruckner, Weimar, dated 17 March 1856, in La Mara, *Briefe*, I, 219; English version in La Mara, *Letters*, 299.

ironically problematic: Czerny attempted to reproduce every detail of instrumental line and registral overlapping on the piano score, ultimately creating “cacophony.”<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, Brahms, a prolific arranger of settings for two pianos or four hands, criticized Robert Keller’s piano transcriptions for four hands, saying that “he was too literal and fussy in the translation, when in fact a good arrangement should be light, brisk, leaving out all that is possible . . . just so it sounds really well for four hands and is playable.”<sup>7</sup> Brahms emphasizes craftsmanship to keep a balance between faithfulness to the score and playability on the keyboard. Brahms’s concern here, of course, resides in creating a four-hand arrangement that is different from a two-piano arrangement: the former requires more compromises because of the physical proximity of the two pianists, whose hand positions may tend to interweave in performance.<sup>8</sup> Brahms’s emphasis on playability also pertains to a four-hand arrangement, differing from Liszt’s approach to his arrangements without hesitating to push technical and artistic limits. However, the criticism of “too literal” and the necessity for adjustments are similarly applicable to a two-piano version and in fact to any type of arrangement. Köhler and Brahms share the concern for a judicious arranger whose concept of “faithful” arrangement is not simply to reproduce the original in a literal manner by cluttering the score but to acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the nature of a different medium on which his transferral and reworking process is reliant.

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<sup>6</sup> Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Arrangement,” 269.

<sup>7</sup> Bozarth, ed., *Brahms–Keller Correspondence*, xxxii, letter dated 21 December 1876; cited in Christensen, “Four-Hand Piano Transcription,” 268.

<sup>8</sup> Ferguson, “Technique,” in *Keyboard Duets*, 27–39. This technical issue has already been discussed earlier in Chapter 6.

The fidelity in the compositional realm develops side by side with technical demands. In other words, the more accurately the arranger adheres to the original, the more technically demanding the arrangement is likely to become. The use of the two keyboards enables arranger-composers to explore more possibilities of transferring the original with greater accuracy, if they wish, than the use of one keyboard with four hands. Consequently, the faithful two-piano arrangements provide a more useful means for performer and reader to follow the essence of the original, as similarly occurred in the case of solo-piano arrangements discussed in Chapters 1–5 above. As for Liszt's two-piano versions of his symphonic poems, they also reveal more fidelity to the original at first sight than the corresponding four-hand versions, as discussed earlier. This was the reason why professional pianists of Liszt's time emphasized his two-piano versions over those for four hands in order to help audiences acquire a better understanding of the original orchestral compositions, just as Walter Bache wanted his London audiences to be acquainted with the two-piano version instead of the four-hand one for that purpose (see Chapter 6).

#### *New types of technique for two pianos*

In addition to a judicious approach to the faithfulness to the original, another important issue pertaining to the transferring process in a two-piano arrangement stems from the necessity and opportunity to coordinate the two pianos and pianists. The use of two keyboards naturally leads arrangers to take into account how they distribute musical material over the two pianos, how they treat the two pianists, and how they can exploit new effects through the interaction between the two.

The distribution of the orchestral fabric between the two pianists took on greater importance in a two-piano arrangement than in a four-hand arrangement. The task is to devise effective ways to allocate the orchestral material to two pianos: which orchestral parts are assigned to Piano I and Piano II, and whether the role of each piano is more or less independent or distinguishable from one other. This issue of separating and sharing parts is essential for arrangers to consider; moreover, it is crucial for them to create a satisfactory combined sound through the interactions of the pianists while keeping a degree of independence or character for each pianist. To take Brahms as a comparison, he tended to assign the principal material to the first piano in his arrangements: the first piano is thus usually associated with string textures and sonorities.<sup>9</sup> But on several occasions the thematic material is also given to Piano II for strategic reasons to highlight the elements of the original.<sup>10</sup> Liszt, however, does not seem to confine himself to any formulaic patterns or rules in the manner of distribution, as will be further discussed in various examples below.

There are two types of opportunity for arrangers' judicious distribution of the material. First, despite the qualms about literal rendering, arrangers are capable of delineating a wider spectrum of orchestral texture or broadly unfolding thematic contours in the more spacious register available on the two pianos. The expanded register also enables arrangers to explore a wider range of dynamic levels and simultaneously contrasting dynamics. Second, arrangers can create particular effects through the interaction of the two pianos: such effects include antiphonal interplay between the two pianos in order to approximate the alternation of the two contrasting groups of

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<sup>9</sup> Goertzen, "Piano Transcriptions of Johannes Brahms," 175.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

instruments or the dialogue-like effect of the original orchestral texture, or introducing new effects appropriate for the new medium. Liszt clearly acknowledged the greater capacities and resources available on the two keyboards and found them more beneficial for approximating a wide spectrum of orchestral texture, dynamics, and instrumentation. It was probably one of the reasons why Liszt preferred the two-piano version to the solo-piano or four-hand for the setting of his *Tasso*, as observed earlier in his second letter of 1856 to Köhler.

At the same time, in the same letter of 1856 to Köhler, Liszt's remark about his two-piano versions as capable of being arranged "freely" may make us ask what this word means in relation to his transferral methods in the repertoire under study. Liszt in fact described his two-piano arrangements this way in several occasions of his writing and letters.<sup>11</sup> Does it mean a "free" manner of transferral, as often found in his paraphrase-type arrangements and thus contrasted with his earlier *partition*-type arrangements? Or does it suggest that in the context of his two-piano arrangements Liszt felt less confined but freer to render a broadly unfolding orchestral texture and exploit more registral and dynamic subtleties through the medium of the two pianos? The latter seems more convincing, because his two-piano arrangements also closely adhere to the original in details and without the significant structural transformations that occur frequently in many paraphrases.

The distribution technique intrinsic to the two-piano arrangement requires each pianist's conscious and continuous efforts to listen attentively to the partner in order to

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<sup>11</sup> Aside from the letter above, see another letter to Louis Köhler, La Mara, ed., *Letter*, I, 270, dated 24 May 1856, in which Liszt stated, "you will receive the somewhat freely arranged pianoforte edition—for two pianos—of the same things [the corresponding symphonic poems]."

maintain a balance between the two and achieve a satisfactory sound.<sup>12</sup> Whereas in the solo-piano arrangement soloists are capable of controlling the whole range of the keyboard under their hands, each player in a two-piano arrangement comes to encounter difficulties generated from the divided material that is required to sound as a whole. Both pianists must consider which strands of texture are assigned to them (e.g., a primary theme or accompaniment), how to render their own part to keep a hierarchy among various parts of the texture, and at the same time how to control the balance in dynamics and articulation with the partner.

While expanding the techniques addressed in the contemporary critiques and current literature, my approach to Liszt's two-piano arrangement reorients the direction of the previously broad views about transferral methods towards more individual, diverse, and specific aspects of Liszt's reworkings. On several occasions Liszt offers distinctive types of techniques, particularly in relation to his distribution and layout, to provide a new way of thinking about transferral for two pianos. More importantly, his techniques are often inextricably linked to the programmatic content of the original symphonic poem. It is essential to understand Liszt's response to an individual program in his own pianistic terms—an approach that is noticeably lacking in the current literature—in order to deepen our understanding of the aesthetics underlying his techniques. What is striking is that on occasion Liszt provides a complete re-reading of his own symphonic work in his pianistic considerations, in which he effectively uses the physical, visual, and acoustic sources available on the two pianos.

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<sup>12</sup> Ferguson, "Techniques," in *Keyboard Duets*, 39.

## **Liszt's Transferral and Reworkings**

In the spectrum of his orchestral arrangements, Liszt's transferral in his two-piano arrangements demonstrates how he continues his primary concern with fidelity to the original and at the same time his creativity to go beyond simple reproduction, as he had already done in his solo-piano arrangements. Liszt's two-piano settings share many transferring techniques with his solo-piano settings, including additions to expand the orchestral effects and sonority, deletions of certain parts to clarify thematic material, registral adjustments to approximate timbral contrast, and transformation of figuration to evoke particular instrumental effects in pianistic terms. At the same time, in the particular context of his two-piano arrangements, Liszt's individual techniques reveal how comprehensively he understood the resources available on the two keyboards, how astutely he assessed the resources that in turn create new types of technique, and most of all, how convincingly he used those distinctive types of technique to convey his reading of the programmatic content of the original.

### *Virtuosic display as a response to programmatic references*

Virtuosic passages that Liszt deliberately deployed and added to his orchestral arrangements continue to appear in his two-piano arrangements. As illustrated in Example 7.1a, the astonishingly virtuosic figurations in Piano I should have now become familiar to the reader after many similar instances in Liszt's earlier *partitions*. Yet more importantly, the virtuosic display provides an effective vehicle for Liszt to convey the particular orchestral effect and programmatic reference of his own symphonic poems.

Example 7.1a. Liszt, *Mazeppa*, “Un poco meno Presto,” two-piano version, mm. 118–21

Un poco meno Presto.

1. Pianoforte

*Legg. p leggero volante*

*Ossia. f marcato assai la melodia.*

*Legg. p (quasi tremolando.)*

Un poco meno Presto

2. Pianoforte

*f espressivo dolente.*

Example 7.1b. Liszt, *Mazeppa*, mm. 118–21

[illegible]



In his orchestral score shown in Example 7.1b, Liszt introduces one of the structurally important themes associated with Mazeppa's suffering and its effect.<sup>13</sup> The theme in Bb minor, marked *expressive dolente*, is performed in the woodwinds and Eb trumpets, slowly unfolding in a dotted martial rhythm and highlighted with a poignant diminished seventh (in the sixth measure, not shown in the example). The overall melancholic nature of the theme represents Mazeppa's impending death and thus a lament for his demise.<sup>14</sup> The accompaniment in the strings, in contrast, displays different characteristics by means of *pizzicato*, *col legno*, and undulating rhythmic patterns. Although the accompaniment has been considered to reinforce the quiet, melancholic, mourning nature of the theme,<sup>15</sup> it is set apart from the theme in contrasting texture, figuration, and instrumentation.

In his two-piano arrangement, Liszt's layout heightens the contrast between the two groups of material in an immediately recognizable way. In addition to the distinction between theme and accompaniment, the contrast is further manifested between *forte* and *piano* on the dynamic level and between straightforward simplicity and high virtuosity in the character of the figuration. Through Liszt's own layout using the two pianos the reader would have been capable of grasping the distinction between the theme and accompaniment clearly without knowing the original orchestral score ahead of the two-

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<sup>13</sup> Sandra J. Fallon-Ludwig, "Religious, Philosophical, and Social Significance in Symphonic Poems of Franz Liszt" (PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2010), 119. Johns, *Symphonic Poems of Liszt*, 65, names it the "Mazeppa motive." This is the second of the two important themes introduced in the first section of *Mazeppa*; the first represents Mazeppa's harrowing ride into Asia, whereas the second focuses on Mazeppa's emotional state. In his analysis of this symphony Saint-Saëns emphasizes the focus of this symphony on "the man who suffers and thinks" over descriptions of the program such as the horse's ride. Phémus [Camille Saint-Saëns], "Musique," *La Renaissance littéraire et artistique* 1/36 (28 December 1872): 286; cited in Johnson, "Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns," 205.

<sup>14</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 120.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

piano version. Even when a player renders the *ossia* for Piano II instead of the straightforward theme underneath, it still reveals more focus on the theme of the strings, because the softer oscillating patterns in conjunction with the theme are still direct and thus help maintain a clear distinction between the theme and the accompaniment.

Against the overt contrasts between the two pianos, it is worth uncovering details of Liszt's reworkings. The stunningly virtuosic figuration in Piano I is the result of Liszt's pianistic rendering, which transforms the undulating triplets in the strings (the upper parts of both violin I and II) into bravura arpeggios that unfold widely across the keyboard. The addition of such virtuosic pianistic figurations is one of Liszt's characteristic reworkings throughout his orchestral arrangements. The virtuosic figurations once again represent his attempt to sustain the interest of the consistent orchestral accompaniment in the piano score, while simultaneously transforming it to a more dazzling pianistic one for his own purpose. In addition, the bravura figurations reflect another aspect of Liszt's earlier practices, in which he paid greater attention to the strings than to the winds and brasses even when the strings do not have a leading role in the thematic material.

Liszt's conventional virtuosic figurations, however, come to gain particular meaning in relation to his faithful response to the original orchestration, which is essentially used to highlight the program. In his analysis of Liszt's *Mazeppa*, Saint-Saëns praised Liszt's use of orchestration to aptly portray an image of an immense and unlimited landscape, in which Mazeppa's disturbing ride and his disorientation occur. "Toward the middle of the composition," Saint-Saëns was particularly impressed with such an effect of vastness:

one gets the impression of an immensity without boundaries; horse and rider flee into the unlimited steppes, and the man's sight becomes disoriented, as the thousand details of the expanse are more than he can take in. There is at that point a marvelous orchestral effect. The strings, divided to the utmost, make heard from the height and depth of their range a mass of little sounds of all types.<sup>16</sup>

It is worth noting that Example 7.1b above is part of the middle section that Saint-Saëns described; more importantly, his remark about the use of the strings precisely refers to the excerpt in Example 7.1b. For Saint-Saëns, the “marvelous orchestral effect” Liszt created comes to a point where the strings in *divisi* writing display the characteristic undulating figurations in an expansive range with “height and depth,” while the remaining string parts participate in “a mass of little sounds of all types” *pizzicato* or *col legno*. Saint-Saëns thus describes both the vastness in range and the delicacy in the sound of the strings.

Saint-Saëns' interpretation helps reinvigorate the meaning of the seemingly conventional virtuosic figuration of Example 7.1a. Liszt could have transferred the undulating pattern of the strings in a literal manner, as his *ossia* for Piano II suggests. The virtuosic figuration Liszt carefully selected is characterized as *arpeggios*, which require skips and sweeps in a wide range of the keyboard, as if approximating the image of the immensity of the landscape. Liszt's own addition of the performance marking “*leggero volante*” (“lightly flying”) in a soft dynamic, in conjunction with other disparate figurations including leaping *staccatissimo* notes on the beat in the left hand and the low Bb–F alternating figures, all help create a sense of the “mass of little sounds in all types.” The bravura figurations Liszt recreated for the strings, therefore, represent his scrupulous

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<sup>16</sup> Phémus [Camille Saint-Saëns], “Musique,” 286; quoted and trans. in Johnson, “Franz Liszt and Camille Saint-Saëns,” 20.

attention to the close correlation between a particular orchestral effect and a programmatic reference. Liszt's own virtuosic figuration immediately dazzles the eyes and ears of the audience, yet on a deeper level it ultimately demonstrates his conscientious approach to the essence of the original and his ability to use the conventional virtuosic figuration in a programmatically significant role.

#### *Distribution of material between Piano I and II*

Compared with arrangements for solo piano or four hands, the distribution of the orchestral texture in a piano score takes on greater importance in two-piano arrangements, in which the availability of the two keyboards apparently adds more complexity to the issue of distribution. The various examples of Liszt's judicious distribution invite comment.

In Liszt's distribution on the surface level, one of the common techniques is to make a clear distinction between theme and accompaniment, assigned to Piano I and II or vice versa. Returning to the "Mazeppa" theme of Example 7.1a above, although the discussion has focused on a particular use of virtuosic figuration, the example represents how carefully Liszt distributes material between the two pianos and how astutely he approaches the dynamic balance between them.

In the performance of the virtuosic passage in Piano I of Example 7.1a, Liszt would have admonished the pianist to maintain the *piano* dynamic in conjunction with his additional marking *leggero volante*. The bravura passagework sustains the orchestral texture and sound, but at the same time serves not as structurally important thematic material but as accompaniment. Had Piano I not been sensitive to the particular dynamic

and articulation, the virtuosic passage would have usurped the thematic line because of its density, richness, and spectacle, creating “cacophony” between the two pianos. The “cacophony,” as discussed earlier in several critiques of piano arrangements, was one of the most deplored aspects in the transferring process from one medium to another. By introducing an effective bravura passage yet subsuming it in *piano* with a light touch, Liszt’s rendering enables him to preserve a dynamic balance between the two pianos and between theme and accompaniment.

In contrast with the radical reworking in Piano I, Piano II concentrates on the extended theme associated with “Mazeppa’s suffering” in a straightforward manner. Liszt strengthens the theme by doubling it at the upper octave, making the second piano concentrate on it alone, thus heightening the straightforward character of the theme without any distraction. Liszt ensured that the Mazeppa theme is immediately audible against the background of the upper parts in a contrasting character, so that it could inform his audience about the important structural element of the original clearly.

Throughout his two-piano arrangements of his own symphonic poems, it is characteristic that Liszt often isolates the theme, assigns it solely to one piano, renders it in a straightforward manner in bare octaves, and pits it against other parts that are far more virtuosic in the counterpart piano.<sup>17</sup> This reworking may sound like a natural outcome of the transferral for two pianos, in the same way that one hand in a solo-piano arrangement concentrates on the theme against the accompaniment in the other hand. Yet it reflects the arranger’s particular consideration of distribution and layout. Kevin

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<sup>17</sup> In the case of *Mazeppa*, examples include the following extended passage of Example 7.1b (from m. 212, Rehearsal H, as shown in Example 7.2a below) as well as those associated with the reappearance of the “Mazeppa” theme and its variants over the course of the composition.

Purrone, one of the twentieth-century writers who delineated various transferral processes, in the preface to his two-piano arrangement of Stravinsky's *Dances Concertantes*, notes the necessity of one hand focusing on a single idea, particularly if it is a primary theme: "If one hand takes important melodic material, and that hand is unencumbered by other notes, the performer will have more control over the material's phrasing, dynamics, shaping, articulation, etc."<sup>18</sup> Purrone's statement is applicable to transferral for both solo piano and two pianos, but it acquires more importance in the latter, which requires more attentive approach to the balance between the two pianists and also because it provides greater possibilities of cluttering a score available on two keyboards and the resultant discordance if the arranger's approach is "too literal." The separation of the theme also helps one pianist to gain "control over" it by concentrating on the detailed nuances of the material in performance.

The transferring process as illustrated in Example 7.1a above—the elimination of certain parts for clarity, the doubled octaves to emphasize the theme, the addition of bravura passages to substitute for string figurations and at the same time to sustain the intensity and to create his own virtuosity—had already been found in Liszt's earlier orchestral arrangements for solo piano. In this two-piano setting, however, the extra keyboard allowed the arranger to explore a fuller, wider, and richer range of sound. With these advantages, Liszt also treats the two pianos shrewdly with respect to the distribution of material, the control of the dynamic level, and the use of effective contrasts in musical material, dynamics, articulation, and figuration. Most of all, Liszt's addition of virtuosic

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<sup>18</sup> Kevin Purrone, "A Two-Piano Arrangement of Stravinsky's *Dances Concertantes*" (DMA document, Texas Technological University, 1994), 4.

figuration to Piano I heightens a particular orchestral effect and programmatic reference, representing both his fidelity to the original and his creativity beyond it.

Although the passage illustrated in Example 7.1a continues for almost one hundred measures (mm. 118–211), what follows from m. 212 is another extended section in the same manner of distribution, as illustrated in Example 7.2a.

Example 7.2a. Liszt, *Mazeppa*, two-piano version, Rehearsal H, mm. 212–15

1. Pianoforte

H (nicht zurückhalten.)

*f marcato*

2. Pianoforte

H (nicht zurückhalten.)

*p*

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The exchange of role between the pianos in Examples 7.1a and 7.2a does not occur at random but stems from Liszt's attentive reading of the orchestral score. These examples occur in the two areas of important thematic variants, in the keys of Bb minor and B minor, respectively, although the latter appears later than the B-minor area and sounds like F# minor. The two areas comprise the middle section in the ternary form that precedes the concluding march. In addition to the thematic material and key difference, the two sections are varied in instrumentation. In Example 7.1a, the extended "Mazeppa" theme is first presented in the woodwinds and trombones, while the strings accompany and maintain the interest in the texture. In Example 7.2a, the thematic motives alternate between the hands of Piano I, responding to alternating groups of instruments, as shown in Example 7.2b, trombones/tubas and cellos/basses. Liszt's distribution of the material between the pianos in Examples 7.1a and 7.2a, therefore, reflects his astute attention to the changes in key, texture, and orchestration of the original, particularly the differing groups of instruments for each piece of thematic material.

Moreover, Liszt assigns the virtuosic display first to Piano I in Example 7.1a (for twenty-three measures) and then to Piano II in Example 7.2a (for sixteen measures). Through the more or less equal significance imposed on each pianist, Liszt attempts to treat each piano as independent, highlighting each of the virtuosic performers in alternation. Although the distribution of theme and accompaniment in the pianos generates duality in the material, the parts are equally important for Liszt: the thematic line is structurally fundamental to preserve the original faithfully, while at the same time the bravura version of the accompaniment is also crucial for sustaining the intensity and volume of the orchestral texture and sound on the one hand and creating incredible

technical demands and artifice on the other hand. In this rendering, the exchange of the virtuosic role from one piano to the other elicits fresh effects. From the perspective of the performer, the pianists are given equal opportunity to have their own moments. From the view of the audience, the shift of focus from one pianist to the other lends a new type of visual and acoustic effect that results from the dynamic interaction of their bodily movement. In addition, there is a practical concern underlying his distribution: had one pianist continued the virtuoso passage throughout the middle section, the physical challenges would have been imposed unevenly on one piano and moreover, a monotonously consistent effect would have been inevitable over the course of such an extended section.

Example 7.3a at first sight illustrates how neatly Liszt distributes intricate orchestral textures to the two pianos to clarify the theme and accompaniment, yet on a deeper level his layout helps to heighten characteristic features of both. More importantly, Liszt's layout reveals that he does not attempt to reproduce the way the orchestral score is set out, but rather, deploys his own adjustments for his own purpose.

Example 7.3a. Liszt, *Les Préludes*, two-piano version, *Allegro tempestuoso* in Rehearsal E, mm. 131–33

The image shows a musical score for two pianos. The top system is for the first pianoforte (1. Pianoforte) and the bottom system is for the second pianoforte (2. Pianoforte). Both parts are marked 'ff' (fortissimo) and 'Allegro tempestuoso'. The first piano part features complex chordal textures and arpeggios. The second piano part includes more melodic lines with arpeggiated accompaniment. Pedaling instructions ('Ped.') are present in both parts. A rehearsal mark '8va' is indicated above the first piano part.

Example 7.3b. Liszt, *Les Préludes*, *Allegro tempestuoso* in Rehearsal E, mm. 131–33

*Allegro tempestuoso.*

The score shows the orchestral texture for measures 131-133. The woodwinds and brass play a rhythmic, stormy pattern, while the strings provide a driving bass line. The tempo is marked *Allegro tempestuoso*. Dynamics include *f* (fortissimo) and *a 2.* (second ending).

In the orchestral score, *Allegro tempestuoso* is part of the section that initiates the “storm” character in the middle section of *Les Préludes*.<sup>19</sup> The agitation represents a life stage of upheaval in sharp contrast with the preceding “love” theme.<sup>20</sup> This “storm” section is based on one of the principal motives derived from the unstable introduction,<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Based on the structural outline made by Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 134.

<sup>20</sup> Liszt’s program delineates the four main affects of love, storm, and nature and heroic. Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 134.

<sup>21</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 135.

characterized as a three-note motive, which is played by the trumpets and tubas in the first measure of Example 7.3b (m. 131). In conjunction with the reiterated motive, the upper strings display a strongly marked rhythmic profile, as characterized by a series of chords with accents on each beat in an ascending direction, while the lower strings join the theme with a different rhythm. The lower strings align themselves with the principal motive by having a similar rhythmic character.

The following phrase from the second measure of Example 7.3b (mm. 132–33), however, switches the role of the instruments. The woodwinds now take over the strong rhythmic profile that was previously in the upper strings, whereas the entire string family is devoted to a variant of the primary motive in a forceful unison.<sup>22</sup> In the midst of the change of instrumentation, the persistent accompanimental patterns play a significant role throughout in intensifying the turbulent and “*tempetuoso*” character by pitting themselves against further forceful thematic material. In his rendering for two pianos, Liszt enriches the texture of the accompaniment by thick, heavy, and full chords with *fortissimo* instead of *forte*. His reworking of the accompaniment builds up energy and intensity, heightening a sense of *tempetuoso* throughout the section.

Liszt does not delineate and distribute orchestral textures as a simple reproduction of the orchestral score. Whereas the memorable accompaniment in the orchestral score shifts from the upper strings to the woodwinds, Liszt did not transfer such a change from one piano to the other, as a literal rendering of the orchestral score would have suggested. Only Piano I hammers persistently on the characteristic rhythm of the accompaniment. Had Liszt attempted a transferral in a literal manner, the abrupt alternation between the

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<sup>22</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 54 designates the variant of the primary motive in *Andante maestoso* as “Birth and Being” (mm. 35–36).

two pianos would have been rather a distraction for both performer and audience following the original content. Liszt could have approximated the timbral difference between strings and woodwinds by alternating the pianos, which is one of the common transferral techniques that attempts to compensate for the lack of instrumental colors on the piano. Yet he did not, showing that his main focus resides in maintaining the clarity of theme and accompaniment in a consistent manner by means of his adjustments in layout.

Liszt's deliberate choice in distribution and layout in turn reveals a dynamic interaction between fidelity and creativity in his transferral. Liszt would have certainly wished the original structure to remain intact in the first place, yet his faithful attempt is neither to "reproduce" the original orchestral texture literally, nor to succumb to a rigid formulaic division of strings and woodwinds. Instead, his fidelity to the original is, paradoxically, to offer his own layout appropriate for the two-piano score. The bass register of Piano II is steadfastly devoted to the most prominent motive, which is combined aptly with the variant of the motive in the cellos and bass that has a similar rhythmic profile to the primary motive. Moving the bass of the motive an octave lower helps the passage to be executed more comfortably without conflicting with the register of the variant of the motive above. Piano I, on the other hand, concentrates on the persistent accompaniment by exploring the whole range of the keyboard freely, reflecting the change of register in the orchestral winds' answer to the strings. Consequently, his distribution aims for the combined effects that result from the playing of the pianists, who are required to listen intently to each other to achieve a whole sound. Example 7.3 thus demonstrates that in the midst of the massive sound accompaniment, Liszt was able to

accomplish thematic clarity by deliberately avoiding a literal manner of division, while at the same time rendering the inherently salient accompaniment in a visually and acoustically stunning manner by concentrating it on one piano.

### *Distinctive types of distribution*

On special occasions Liszt offers a new type of thinking about distribution, in which his meticulous approach to the original and his creative approach to two keyboards are complementary in representing his individuality in his transferal. The opening of *Les Preludes*, as in Examples 7.4a and 7.4b, illustrates how Liszt crosses the individual thematic line, how he distributes it in the pianos, and ultimately how he creates unusual effects through such a distinctive distribution.

Example 7.4a. Liszt, *Les Préludes*, two-piano version, opening

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Liszt's *Les Préludes*, two-piano version. The score is written for two pianos, labeled "1. Pianoforte." and "2. Pianoforte." The tempo is marked "Andante." and the key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The time signature is common time (C). The first piano part (1. Pianoforte.) begins with a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a half rest, and then a quarter note G4. The bass clef part is a simple accompaniment, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a half rest, and then a quarter note G4. The second piano part (2. Pianoforte.) begins with a treble clef and a bass clef. The melody is in the treble clef, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a half rest, and then a quarter note G4. The bass clef part is a simple accompaniment, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a half rest, and then a quarter note G4. The score is marked with a "p" (piano) dynamic and the word "Quartet" in italics. The first piano part has a "2 4 5" marking above the final measure, indicating a fingering for a triplet. The second piano part has a "p" marking below the first measure, indicating a piano dynamic.

Example 7.4b. Liszt, *Les Préludes*, opening, only string parts

The image shows a musical score for the opening of Liszt's *Les Préludes*, specifically the first five measures for the string parts. The tempo is marked 'Andante.' and the dynamics are 'p' (piano). The strings play a unison pizzicato in measures 1 and 2, then switch to arco in measure 3, continuing the melodic line through measures 4 and 5. The parts are for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and Double Bass.

In the original symphonic poem, the two initial unison *pizzicatos* in the strings lead to an important germinal motive that comprises the three notes in m. 3, representing what Johns calls “awakening of consciousness.”<sup>23</sup> The motive initiates an opening phrase, characterized by a slow tempo, soft dynamic, irregular phrasing structure, unstable key, and unison writing in the strings, while the rest of the orchestral parts remain silent (hence only the string parts are shown in Example 7.4b). The salient feature of the opening motive throughout the introduction is its unfolding in a constant state of instability in phrasing, structure, and key.<sup>24</sup> This incomplete and unsettling character, in combination with a quiet and speculative mood, is used appropriately to convey the idea of the initial stage of “growth.”<sup>25</sup> The idea of the “growth” will be

<sup>23</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 54–55. One of the variants of the motive is observed earlier in Example 7.3b.

<sup>24</sup> It is reiterated in subsequent sequences but without any conclusive sense of the beginning and ending of the phrase, and moreover, constantly changing its harmonic color until it reaches the A section, *Andante maestoso* from m. 35, where the “consciousness” motive in C major, a variant of the initial motive, is proclaimed.

<sup>25</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 135–36.

developed in Liszt's narrative, in which he transforms the opening germ motive into full, strong, and directed themes for the remainder of the symphonic poem.<sup>26</sup>

In his two-piano version, it is striking that Liszt cuts the phrase in the middle by dividing the unison strings between the pianos. Liszt moves the theme from the second piano in a lower register to the first piano in a higher register. In the second half of the phrase, the bottom octave disappears in the orchestral version as the basses drop out, but Liszt maintains it in the piano version. It is no coincidence that this division corresponds to the shift of instruments from four-member strings to three-member. Liszt's use of this deliberate distribution in mid-phrase represents his response to the subtle distinction of timbres by means of the shift from one group of strings to the other. (Despite the subtle shift of instrumentation, Liszt's incorporation of the cue "Quartetti" remains consistent throughout the opening phrase. His first cue at the outset seems to refer to the string family in a generic sense, while the second one may be needed for the first piano to notice it.)

The division of one individual line between the pianos demonstrates Liszt's faithful and at the same time creative approach to the original. This division may appear curious. But when we recall the unstable character of the opening phrase of the original in its structure, key, and development, it makes the intrinsically incomplete phrase seem even more fragmented. As discussed just above, the division also reflects his attempts to reproduce a subtle change of timbre from cellos and basses to violas. On the other hand, it also creates a novel effect in both visual and aural dimensions not inherent in the original uniform writing in the strings. Through this distribution and interaction between

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.



the two pianos, Liszt's reworking enables both audience and performer to experience a wider spectrum of sound than that available on one keyboard. In addition, when considering the physical placement of the two pianos, whether the two pianos are placed tail to tail or side by side, the movement of the thematic line from one piano to the other corresponds to the subtle change of timbre and at the same time creates a different type of visual and aural sensation. The performance then entails a more noticeable movement of two halves of a single thematic line between the pianos; and moreover, it requires the pianists to listen to each other attentively to accomplish a continuous thematic idea through their interplay.

Liszt could have transferred the opening thematic line solely to one piano, or he could have made the two pianists participate together in playing it in unison, as a literal rendering might have done; the result, however, would have been an inevitably consistent and monotonous sound on the keyboard. Liszt's division avoids the potential defect of the literal reproduction, and his deliberate division offers his solution to the lack of color that is often deplored in piano arrangements. By using the resources available on the two keyboards fully and effectively, Liszt's reworking, through his skillful distribution of musical material, transports audience and performer into a more spacious aura, ultimately eliciting his own effects in his two-piano score.

In the scope of Liszt's two-piano arrangements, it is noteworthy that the technique above—the division of an individual voice into two keyboards by crossing the mid-phrase of the voice—is in fact unusual. Moreover, when it appeared in a number of two-piano arrangements from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the majority by Liszt's students or successors, this particular technique of distribution was used primarily

for practicality or technical feasibility.<sup>27</sup> In other words, the arranger usually deployed this technique at a place where he encountered a technically difficult part of the original; by sharing the part between two pianos, the arranger could transfer it more easily and make it more playable.<sup>28</sup> For such arrangers, therefore, the properties of the two keyboards sometimes existed for practicality and convenience. In the case of Liszt, however, his deliberate cutting across an individual instrumental part stems neither from his pursuit of a practical purpose nor from any compromise of technical demands. Rather, it discloses his microscopic attention to a subtle change of instrumental timbre, his efforts to capture the details of the original in as sophisticated a way as possible, and most of all, his acute sense of exploiting sources available on the two keyboards and his offering a novel way of thinking about distribution.

Example 7.5a continues to show how Liszt deploys a distinctive type of distribution and coordination between the pianos.

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<sup>27</sup> This observation is based on several arrangements by Hermann Behn, Karl Grunsky, and others. Klefstad, “Style and Technique,” 35, investigated a technique named “sharing parts,” which is different from the case of Example 7.4a used by Liszt.

<sup>28</sup> In his arrangement of Bruckner’s Fourth Symphony, for example, Grunsky shared the demanding part for the horns between the pianists to make its complete texture more comfortable to perform. Klefstad, “Style and Technique,” 146.

Example 7.5a. Liszt, *Dante Symphony*, Rehearsal E, two-piano version, mm. 79–81

1. Pianoforte

2. Pianoforte

*Ped.*

*accelerando*

*Ped.*

Detailed description: This musical score is for two pianos. The key signature has three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first piano part (top) features a complex, arpeggiated texture with frequent accidentals and a 'Ped.' (pedal) marking. The second piano part (bottom) has a more rhythmic, eighth-note pattern, also with 'Ped.' markings. An 'accelerando' marking is placed between the two staves in the middle measure.

Example 7.5b. Liszt, *Dante Symphony*, Rehearsal E, mm. 79–81

Oboe

E. Hn.

Cl. (B $\flat$ )

B. Cl. (A)

Bsn.

Hn. (F)

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

D. B.

*accel.*

*p*

*mf*

*f*

*a 2.*

*accel.*

Detailed description: This is an orchestral score for measures 79-81. The woodwinds (Oboe, E. Hn., Cl. (Bb), B. Cl. (A), Bsn., Hn. (F)) and strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, D. B.) are shown. The Oboe and Clarinet (Bb) parts start with a 'p' (piano) dynamic. The Bassoon part has a 'p' dynamic and a 'a 2.' (second ending) marking. The Horn (F) part has a 'f' (forte) dynamic. The strings (Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, D. B.) all start with a 'p' dynamic. An 'accel.' (accelerando) marking is placed above the Oboe part in the first measure. A 'mf' (mezzo-forte) dynamic is marked for the E. Hn. and B. Cl. (A) parts in the second measure. A 'f' dynamic is marked for the Hn. (F) part in the second measure. An 'accel.' marking is also present at the bottom of the D. B. part in the third measure.

At first sight, Piano I and Piano II share a series of incessant two-note motives, yet Piano I follows the wind parts, whereas the figuration in Piano II evokes the tremolos in a series of triplets in the strings. It is unmistakable that the movement of the right hands of the pianos is not synchronized but oblique. The right hand of Piano II does not simply double the material of Piano I uniformly, but the former follows the latter an eighth note later, as if chasing or imitating what has just happened. Moreover, the oblique movement of the two pianists occurs in the midst of an *accelerando* in a rapid tempo. As a result, the combined sound of the pianists creates a novel tremolo effect akin to tremolo pulsations in the strings. Liszt's reworking thus simultaneously fulfills the dual demands of capturing the characteristic main motive and simulating tremolos.

The way Liszt accomplished the tremolo effect is notable. He could have used the conventional keyboard idioms of tremolos, including broken octaves. Instead, he deliberately chose to deploy a particular manner of performance that could take advantage of interaction between the pianists. The pianists are required to calculate the phase of their immediate imitation carefully in order to approximate a tremolo-like effect; otherwise, their performance would easily fall into discordance.

As for Liszt's layout, he could also have approximated the timbral contrast between the strings and woodwinds by assigning the string tremolos to one piano and the salient motives in the woodwinds to the other. Yet he chose not to make an overt distinction between the two groups of instruments in his pianistic layout and distribution. Rather, he attempted to capture the simultaneity of two different layers of textures of the orchestra score, the etched two-note motives and tremolos, focusing on their combined

effect. This effect is only possible in the medium of two pianos because it is physically impossible for two players to hit the same keys at the same time.

In his earlier solo-piano arrangements, Liszt's virtuosity often resides in his delineation of a different set of articulations and figurations of the original (to take one example, see Chapter 3, Example 3.1). The more he heightens the character of an individual line, the more novel the whole sound becomes. But what is characteristic in Example 7.5a is that, despite the distinction between strings and woodwinds in the original, Liszt saw the potential sharing of the material between the two, the same content of the contour, extending it to recreate his own performance manner that imposes a new type of technical virtuosity on the pianists. The result of his reworking is still to capture the disparate textures of the articulated motive and tremolos simultaneously, not through an overt distinction in layout but through his offering of a unique performance manner using the interaction between the pianos.

*Techniques and program: Hunnenschlacht ("The Battle of the Huns")*

In the majority of his symphonic poems Liszt provided one or more written programs that contain explicitly programmatic references.<sup>29</sup> Although it is not completely clear whether Liszt wrote the entirety of these programs himself, and although many of the programs were written after the compositions, a number of scholars have recognized the significance of Liszt's programs in the aesthetic foundation and analytical discussion of

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<sup>29</sup> The symphonic poems with programs are *Tasso*, *Prometheus*, *Les Préludes*, *Hunnenschlacht*, *Orpheus*, *Héroïde funèbre*, *Mazeppa*, and *Die Ideale*. Johns, *Symphonic Poems of Liszt*, 45, claims that "only *Hungaria* and *Festklänge*" do not have appended programs, although their titles are suggestive; but Reeves Shulstad, "Liszt's Symphonic Poems," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, 215, adds *Hamlet*, which also does not have a preface, although it was intended to portray specific scenes from Shakespeare's play.

his music.<sup>30</sup> Liszt's symphonic poems mostly comprise clearly defined sections that are distinguishable visually in the scores and aurally in their performances; the programs help to illuminate narrative units that correspond to the well-defined sections.<sup>31</sup> By giving examples from Liszt's two-piano arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht*, the following paragraphs focus on how his rendering heightens the battle between two opposing forces and its resolution inherent in the original program. Continuing the earlier discussion, Liszt's reworking also demonstrates how he reinvigorates his transferral techniques in an appropriate manner for the medium of two pianos.

The major source of inspiration for Liszt's symphonic poem *Hunnenschlacht* (1857) was Wilhelm von Kaulbach's painting *Die Hunnenschlacht* (1834–47).<sup>32</sup> The painting is a large fresco that depicts the battle between two opposing forces, the Huns and Romans, as reproduced in Figure 7.1.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> On the authorship, see the discussion of Princess Carolyne von Sayn-Wittgenstein's intervention in the formation of the program in Walker, "Liszt and the Orchestra," in *Franz Liszt: The Weimar Years 1848–1861*, 307–8. Whereas Walker uses this authenticity issue in part to reduce the connection between the program and Liszt's music, a number of scholars have focused on the importance of programmatic references in Liszt's music, including Johns, *Symphonic Poems of Liszt*; Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance"; and a brief discussion in Michael Saffle, "Orchestral Works," in *The Liszt Companion*, ed. Ben Arnold (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 235–79.

<sup>31</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 45.

<sup>32</sup> In several of his letters, Liszt stated that the painting was a source: see his letter of 1855 to Agnes Street-Klindworth in *Franz Liszt and Agnes Street-Klindworth: A Correspondence, 1854–1886*, ed. Pauline Pocknel (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2000), letter 26; another letter of the same year to Prince Carolyne in Williams, *Franz Liszt: Selected Letters*, 382–83; cited in Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 146–47; *Briefe*, Vol. 4, 376; cited in Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 56. For the discussion of Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*, see Serge Gut, *Liszt* (Paris: Editions de Fallois, 1989), 371; Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 56–57; Wolfram Steinbeck, "Musik nach Bildern: Zu Franz Liszts Hunnenschlacht," in *Töne, Farben, Formen: über Musik und die Bildenden Künste—Festschrift Elmar Budde zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Elisabeth Schmierer (Laaber: Laaber Verlag, 1995), 17–38; Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 145–69. Liszt met Kaulbach (1804–1874) in Munich in 1843 and knew the painting before the premiere of his symphonic poem conducted by himself at the Court Theater in Weimar in 1857. Steinbeck, "Musik nach Bildern," 26.

<sup>33</sup> The painting is a part of a cycle of thirty-nine large oil murals depicting the stages of development in cultural history. *Oxford Art Online*, s.v. "Wilhelm von Kaulbach" by Annemarie Menke, [www.oxfordartonline.com](http://www.oxfordartonline.com), accessed 26 January 2015; Steinbeck, "Musik nach Bildern," 24; Fallon-Ludwig, "Religious," 145. The battle in 451 AD is considered one of the bloodiest in history. Charlton Thomas Lewis, *A History of Germany* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1874), 39–43; Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 146.

Figure 7.1. Wilhelm von Kaulbach, *Die Hunnenschlacht*



A number of Liszt scholars agree that Liszt did not attempt to provide a mere description of the painting through his music, but transformed the ideas of the source into his own narrative structure by commenting on what he believed about the cross and Christianity.<sup>34</sup> Liszt's letter of 1879 to his British pupil and friend Walter Bache provides insight into how he was envisaging the ideas of the source while simultaneously reinterpreting them for his own purpose:

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<sup>34</sup> Gut, *Liszt*, 371; Johns, *Symphonic Poems of Liszt*, 56–57; Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 148, 150.

Kaulbach's world-renowned picture presents two battles: one on Earth and one in the air, according to the legend in which warriors continued to battle without cease even after their deaths, as spirits. In the middle of the picture the cross and its mysterious light appear; it is this [the cross and its light] upon which my symphonic poem is founded. The chorale *Crux fidelis*, which develops little by little, embodies the idea of Christianity's final victory with its powerful love of God and men.<sup>35</sup>

As in the original picture shown in Figure 7.1, Liszt captures the ceaseless battle on two levels, one on Earth and the other in the air. Unlike the original, however, Liszt regards the cross as the main symbolic concept of his composition; although the object is found only in the top left-hand corner of the painting, Liszt makes it come to the center to symbolize Christianity and by extension, humanitarian love.<sup>36</sup> His own reading ultimately led him to deploy the chorale *Crux fidelis* ("Faithful Cross") as an embodiment of Christianity's victory in the preceding battle.

Liszt offered his programs in both French and German to bolster his re-reading of the painting and also to ensure that the audience would understand his message properly.<sup>37</sup> He appended both versions of the program to the preface of his two-piano arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht* published by Breitkopf & Härtel in 1861. In his French program Liszt states how he attempted to transfer the idea of the source into music, particularly focusing on his use of the two musical motives to represent the contrasting forces of the disruptive Huns and the moral Romans in line with Christianity.<sup>38</sup> Liszt notes that the Huns are characterized as ferocious, uncivilized, and corruptive, whereas

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<sup>35</sup> La Mara, *Briefe* I, 281. English translation in La Mara, *Letters*, II, 352; quoted in Gut, *Liszt*, 370, and Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 148. Also see part of Liszt's letter to Frau von Kaulbach, dated 1 May 1857, La Mara, *Letters*, I, 338–89, as mentioned above (see Chapter 6).

<sup>36</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 150.

<sup>37</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 56, points out that the French and German programs do not complement each other perfectly: the German delineates musical organization more clearly than the flowery style of the French. Despite the disparity between the two programs, Johns admonishes us to preserve and refer to both in order to follow the musical narrative of the symphonic poem.

<sup>38</sup> Liszt's preface to his two-piano arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht* (Breitkopf & Härtel, 1861).



the Romans represent “serene powers” and “virtues radiating from the idea of Christianity.”<sup>39</sup> In his German program Liszt continues to portray the ensuing battles and Christianity’s victory: “More and more fanatical surges the battle of destruction; more and more grim becomes the turmoil—until suddenly light flashes through the gloomy clouds: it emanates from the winning cross. Mighty fanfares proclaim the triumph of Christianity.”<sup>40</sup> Liszt’s battle ultimately extends beyond a physical struggle between the Romans and Huns on a simple level, coming to symbolize the conflict between “good and evil,” “Christianity and Paganism,” and “civilization and barbarism.”<sup>41</sup>

Liszt’s program as set out in his preface helps to delineate his musical narrative structure. Because the program portrays the conflict between the Huns and Romans, along with the third force of Christianity, Liszt casts his narrative in a three-part structure with an introduction.<sup>42</sup> The first section mirrors the battle by introducing the two contrasting themes for each side and pitting them against each other. The second section intensifies the confrontation and struggle between the two forces by manipulating the two themes in fragmentation, rhythmic and harmonic modifications, and finally fugue. The final section resolves the struggle by presenting a full statement of the central theme of Christianity, which is based on his “cross-motif” drawn from a Gregorian chant *Crux fidelis*.<sup>43</sup> Because the cross represents Christ’s sacrifice and salvation, and the Roman soldiers are related to the defense of Christianity, Liszt uses both the theme for the Romans and the *Crux fidelis* theme in alternation, although the former remains

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<sup>39</sup> Liszt’s preface to his two-piano arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht*.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 56; Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 150–51.

<sup>42</sup> This analysis of three-part structure is based on Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 152.

<sup>43</sup> Paul Merrick, *Revolution and Religion in The Music of Liszt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 94. Liszt creates his “cross motif” based on the opening intervals of *Crux fidelis*.

subordinate to the chant, while eliminating the Huns' theme from the final section.<sup>44</sup> As is common in most of his symphonic poems, the narrative culminates in grand, triumphant music to embody the apotheosis of Christianity, representing the archetypal narrative of a conflict followed by victory and celebration.<sup>45</sup>

The individual musical motives or themes that Liszt deployed correspond to programmatic references. He aptly portrays the two contrasting themes of the Huns and Romans with distinctive musical characteristics.<sup>46</sup> As illustrated in Example 7.6a, Liszt attempts to heighten the ferocious character of the Huns' theme when it appears as a complete entity for the first time in the section *Più mosso, Allegro energico assai*.

Example 7.6a. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, Rehearsal A, “*più mosso*,” mm. 29–32

**Più mosso. (Allegro energico assai.)**

<sup>44</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 159–60.

<sup>45</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 57.

<sup>46</sup> Fallon-Ludwig defines the two themes as Theme 1 and 2 as well as the *Crux fidelis* as Theme 3, whereas Johns reads the former two as Motives 2 and 3 by viewing the introductory motive as Motive 1.

Liszt concentrates on a group of strings by assigning the Huns theme to the first violin and contrasting rhythms to the remaining parts. The theme is sharply etched with detailed articulations of triplets in *staccatos* and an accented two-eighth-note figure, while other parts are pounding on unyielding triplets in alternation with triplets in the theme. It is characteristic of this passage that triplets in the theme alternate with triplets in the other parts, creating a back-and-forth that emphasizes the alternation of triplets and duplets in the theme itself. This characteristic feature becomes particularly clear in m. 31 in the dialogue between violin I and viola.

The character of the theme is explicitly described on the top of the score as *Piu mosso*, “From here onwards the beat is Alla breve!”; on the theme in the strings, NB: “The triplet-figures must be played with great verve and bravura and the quavers marked > be played very pointed.”<sup>47</sup> The angular, terse motivic ideas, accents built on chromatic passing notes, and strong forward movement all help to convey a fierce character of the Huns, as if representing violent Huns embarked on the battle.<sup>48</sup> The editor also aptly captured this programmatic representation of the ferocious opponent by incorporating his marking of “*violente*.”<sup>49</sup> Moreover, Liszt moves towards dissonant tension by using a clash between the theme and other parts. The accented dissonances in the two-eighth-note figure in the first violin become more poignant when combined with the rigid triplets in the other parts. The tritone relationship between B and F in the bass, which alternates

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<sup>47</sup> Franz Liszt: *Musikalische Werke*, Serie I, Band 6 (Leipzig: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1910).

<sup>48</sup> Johns, *Symphonic Poems*, 36, categorizes this passage as one of the examples of the *Sturm-und-Drang* topic in Liszt’s symphonic poems. Johns, op. cit., 58–59, further discusses this passage of the Huns’ theme in relation to “sequential writing,” a device often encountered in the symphonic poems, which is a harmonic device to juxtapose chromatically-related key centers within sequence structures. The programmatic content employs larger sequences as major structural underpinning to help maintain narrative tension.

<sup>49</sup> The marking does not exist in the score published by Breitkopf & Härtel, n. d. [1885], but it would have been in Liszt’s draft.

the root and second inversion of the diminished-seventh chord of B minor, is also used to heighten the dissonant conflict.<sup>50</sup>

In the corresponding two-piano score, as illustrated in Example 7.6b, Liszt preserves the original character of the theme, although his layout of the theme is highly characteristic, using a distinctive division of the thematic material between the pianos.

Example 7.6b. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, Rehearsal A, “*Piu mosso*,” two-piano version, mm. 29–32

Whereas the Huns’ theme is presented solely in the first violin of his orchestral score, Liszt distributes it between the hands of Piano I. This division creates a distinction and alternation between the triplet and accented two-eighth-note figure, both of which comprise a single thematic line in the original. This particular layout in turn entails a cross-hand technique in execution, highlighting the accented two-eighth-note figure with an additional visual effect. Liszt’s manuscript indeed reveals his meticulous accent

<sup>50</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 158.

markings on this two-eighth-note figure in blue pencil, suggesting his care about the articulation of the motive. In the first edition above, the inscription “very weightily and sharply marked” (*sehr heftig und scharf markirt*), not present in the manuscript, reflects either the editor’s response to the composer’s intention or the composer’s later insertion to reinforce the articulation.

Liszt further stresses the two-eighth-note figure by doubling it in the right hand of Piano II, while the left hand provides a dissonant background of the unyielding triplets moving in tritone-related basses. The technique of doubling is frequently found in a transferral process as an attempt to thicken texture or increase volume. In this case, however, doubling is less relevant to simulating the orchestral sound and effect, and more likely for emphasizing the sharply etched figure in dissonance, which ultimately helps to embody the fierce Huns. Consequently, the two pianists display a uniform sound and execution on the surface to heighten the original character of the Huns’ theme, at the same time as their rendering creates a distinctive visual, aural, and physical experience through Liszt own distribution and performative power.

In addition, Liszt’s deliberate choice of a particular layout of the Huns’ theme reveals his attempt to help the audience follow his music faithfully. Liszt would have wanted to inform the audience of the first appearance of the theme in a clear sense. This intention becomes even more evident in comparing Example 7.6b above with the theme’s later appearance in Example 7.6c below.

Example 7.6c. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, Rehearsal D, two-piano version

The musical score for Example 7.6c is a two-piano arrangement of Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*, Rehearsal D. It consists of two staves, labeled '1. Pianoforte' and '2. Pianoforte'. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats), and the time signature is common time (C). The score is divided into three measures. In the first measure, Piano I (left) plays a tremolo in the bass clef, while Piano II (right) plays a melodic line in the treble clef. In the second measure, Piano I continues the tremolo, and Piano II plays a more complex melodic line with triplets. In the third measure, Piano I plays a tremolo, and Piano II plays a melodic line with triplets. The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings like 'Ped.' (pedal).

When the theme returns, Liszt renders it in a more literal manner by assigning it solely to one hand of Piano II. He doubles the two-eighth-note figure at the octave below, just as the figure in the violin and oboe is combined with that in the clarinet an octave lower. At the same time Piano I displays the orchestral tremolos with an increase in volume and intensity. After the audience had become acquainted with the Huns' theme in Example 7.6b, the reappearance of the theme in Example 7.6c would have been more recognizable in the midst of the extensive tremolo passage.

Liszt's different approach to the same thematic material in Examples 7.6b and 7.6c uncovers an intriguing relationship between his faithfulness and creativity. When he wishes to convey his theme clearly, his approach is less literal but more creative, as observed in Example 7.6b. His attempts to intensify the original character of the theme paradoxically led him to move away from a literal transferral to a reinvigoration of the theme, making it stand out by means of his individual approach to layout and performance spectacle. When the theme returns, as in Example 7.6c, however, Liszt would have felt secure about his literal approach to it. A discerning audience would have

recognized the theme more easily the second time; but more importantly, it was Liszt who made the theme audible in the first place with his individual approach, which safely led him to attempt fidelity to the original in the second place.

As illustrated in Example 7.6b, therefore, Liszt's particular technique of dividing the theme reveals his attempts to heighten the original character of the theme and help the audience to grasp it immediately, while offering his revitalization of the theme by exploiting sources available on the new medium of two pianos. By separating the accented two-eighth-note figure, Liszt was able to concentrate on the characteristic figure in combination with the grating accented dissonances, intensifying the ferocious character of the Huns. At the same time Liszt took full advantage of the two pianos by making the figure visually recognizable in execution: Piano I displays the cross-hand technique, while the right hand of Piano II is synchronized with the former in order to engage with the figure. In addition, Liszt's differing rendering of the theme in the first full statement of the Huns' theme and its later appearance demonstrate his astute sense of using the two sides of faithfulness and creativity on a dynamic level.

In contrast with the Huns, the characteristics of the Romans' theme, as in Example 7.7a, are immediately opposite.

Example 7.7a. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, eight measures before Rehearsal C

Bsn. *a 2. ten.* *p marc.* *sempre piano*  
 Timp. *pp* *sempre pianissimo*  
 Vln. I  
 Vln. II  
 Viola *p* *sempre piano*  
 Cello *ten.* *p marc.* *sempre piano*  
 D. B. *p* *pizz.*

The overall diatonic theme of the Romans is in sharp contrast with the chromatic, dissonant theme of the Huns. It also unfolds in a broken minor triad, proceeding in a stately manner in a militaristic rhythm and in the low register of bassoon and cello.

Although the tempo remains the same in both the Huns' and Romans' themes, the latter sounds more extensive and slower than the former because of its longer motivic structure and rhythmic durations.<sup>51</sup> Whereas the Huns' theme is constructed on a terse motive in two beats with a series of *staccato* eighth notes, the Roman theme is extended to a two-measure unit that repeats four times and shapes an eight-measure phrase. The contrasting forces described in the program thus prompt contrasting musical characterization, ultimately setting up a symbolic opposition between the two themes: the

<sup>51</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, "Significance," 158.



Huns as the “evil” force with no civilization and no religion, and the Romans as the source of purity and Christianity.

In contrast to his creative rendering of the Huns theme above (Example 7.6b), Liszt transfers the contrasting Romans’ theme in a more literal manner, as illustrated in Examples 7.7a and 7.7b, while simultaneously his addition of a bass chromatic scale in conjunction with the theme lends a different character from the original.

Example 7.7b. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, nine measures before Rehearsal C, two-piano version

The musical score for Example 7.7b is a two-piano arrangement. It consists of two systems, each with five measures. The first system is marked 'sempre pp'. The first piano part (top) features a tremolo (trem.) in the right hand and a chromatic scale in the left hand, marked 'pp Ped.' and 'geisterhaft.'. The second piano part (bottom) features a chromatic scale in the right hand and a tremolo in the left hand, marked 'ten.' and '8vb'. The score is divided into two systems, each with five measures. The first system is marked 'sempre pp'.

In his two-piano score shown in Example 7.7b, Liszt delineates the orchestral texture neatly to make a distinction between theme and background tremolos by assigning them to Pianos II and I, respectively. His layout also helps the audience to grasp the appearance of the second theme clearly as an important structural element by separating the theme in one piano. For a discerning audience, moreover, this theme immediately invites contrast with the previous Huns’ theme.

At the same time, Liszt’s addition of a chromatic scale-passage makes an indelible impression. This completely new material serves a distinctive role when it

relates to the particular programmatic content of *Hunnenschlacht* and Liszt's reading of the program in his pianistic terms.<sup>52</sup> When the chromatic scale of Example 7.7b embarks on its extensive appearance, Liszt or the editor inserted the inscription *geisterhaft* ("ghostly"). The inscription already appeared at the beginning of the symphonic poem to evoke an ominous and foreboding atmosphere just before the battle breaks out. Although the inscription is not Liszt's own marking in his manuscript,<sup>53</sup> the composer had already suggested the "ghostly" mood of the composition by providing his instruction for the first section marked *Tempetuoso, allegro non troppo*: "Conductors: the entire color should be kept very dark, and all instruments must sound like ghosts."<sup>54</sup>

On a surface level, the chromatic-scale passage Liszt deployed suggests the timpani rolls. The representation of the timpani rolls has a precedent in his *partition* of Rossini's *Guillaume Tell* Overture (see Chapter 4), aligning his rendering here with his earlier one in his reworking of orchestral compositions. The scale also aptly captures the ominous atmosphere in conjunction with the *sempre pp*. On a deeper level, however, his additions change the original character of the Romans' theme when it enters for the first time. The ghostly mood is in fact absent in the original orchestral score; moreover, it is not appropriate for the pristine nature of the Romans. In addition, the orchestral tremolos as background for the Romans' theme do not convey a forbidding and unstable character

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<sup>52</sup> Although Liszt's additions are not unusual in his arrangements in general, it is nevertheless worth noting that they are more copious, conspicuous, and characteristic in his arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht* than in his other two-piano arrangements. Whereas the overall additions are usually associated with Liszt's virtuosic figurations, many of the instances in this arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht* involve distinctively characteristic figurations that are entirely absent in the corresponding orchestral score. For another instance, see six measures before Rehearsal D (from m. 129), in which a "wild" (editorial) effect is achieved by adding a new figuration in the right hand of Piano I; other instances include seven measures after Rehearsal B, eight measures before Rehearsal; eight measures before Rehearsal F; and towards the end of Rehearsal P.

<sup>53</sup> The inscription does not appear in Liszt's manuscript of *Hunnenschlacht* for two pianos.

<sup>54</sup> Walker, *Franz Liszt*, II, 311.

at all, as represented in tremolos associated with a supernatural and evil force in Weber's *Der Freischütz* overture, but simply dwell on a single pitch C to sustain the main key. Liszt deliberately adds the contrasting layer of a chromatic bass to his own ends. He would have wished to bring the ghostly mood back from the introduction to make it continue in the midst of the pure statement of the Romans, as if portraying the dark force as a constant threat to the Romans. The result of his reworking is his re-reading of his own symphonic poem.

As shown in Example 7.7b, therefore, Liszt's rendering of the Romans' theme demonstrates that his layout of the theme and accompaniment as well as his own pianistic figurations provide a dual reading of the program. By reproducing the theme and assigning it solely to one piano, he was able to accomplish a clear sense of a purifying force of the Romans as opposed to the contrasting Huns. At the same time, by incorporating a new chromatic line, he suggested a new layer of meaning to the Romans' theme that lies in a constant battle with the Huns.

In his pianistic renderings of the two primary themes for the Huns and Romans, it is important to understand not just how Liszt characterizes each, but more importantly, how he relates the themes to each other and how he uses the two pianos to portray those relationships in a dramatic context. As observed in Example 7.7b above, the result of Liszt's rendering of the Romans' theme is not a literal approach to the original but his own reading that deliberately juxtaposes the theme with the contrasting force of the Huns through an additional chromatic bass. In this reading, the two pianos become two opposing physical forces, lending an impression of being in constant battle.

Liszt's use of the dramatic relationship between the two pianos continues in his rendering of the *Crux fidelis* theme, which represents the third force of the program.

Example. 7.8a illustrates that the *Crux fidelis* theme appears for the first time in the first section, before its celebratory version in the final section.

Example 7.8a. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, The *Crux fidelis*, mm. 96–101

Example 7.8a shows the musical score for the *Crux fidelis* theme in Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*, measures 96–101. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for T. Tbn., Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Cello, and D. B. The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into two sections by a double bar line. The first section (mm. 96–101) is marked *mp marcato* and *arco*. The second section (mm. 102–107) is marked *wild. furioso* and *ff*. The T. Tbn. part is marked *Choral.* and *mp marcato*. The Violin I and II parts are marked *arco* and *mf*. The Viola part is marked *arco* and *mf*. The Cello part is marked *arco* and *mf*. The D. B. part is marked *pizz.* and *(mf) marc.*

Example 7.8b. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, The *Crux fidelis*, mm. 96–101, two-piano version

Example 7.8b shows the musical score for the *Crux fidelis* theme in Liszt's *Hunnenschlacht*, measures 96–101, two-piano version. The score is for two pianofortes (1. Pianoforte and 2. Pianoforte). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into two sections by a double bar line. The first section (mm. 96–101) is marked *sempre staccato e piano* and *sempre piano*. The second section (mm. 102–107) is marked *ff wild. ff* and *ff*. The 1. Pianoforte part is marked *sempre staccato e piano* and *sempre piano*. The 2. Pianoforte part is marked *mf Choral.* and *ff*.

The *Crux fidelis* theme is, as observed in Liszt's program, the embodiment of his belief in God and religion, dissociating itself from any connection to the themes of mankind. In

contrast with the previous themes, it is musically characterized as modal, conjunct, and in free rhythm, which consists almost entirely of whole notes and half notes and alternates between triple and duple meter in an attempt to replicate the rhythm of Gregorian chant.<sup>55</sup>

Liszt had already focused on the chorale “develop[ing] little by little” until it culminates in an apotheosis, as indicated in his letter of 1879 to Walter Bache quoted above. Example 7.8a illustrates part of the process of the theme’s gradual development and transformation. It should be pointed out that the way the *Crux fidelis* theme appears dissociates it immediately from the rest of the orchestra in two respects. First, it abruptly enters without any harmonic preparation. Second, it intrudes on an ongoing texture that is strikingly contrasting. The contrasting texture that precedes the theme is based on a particular motive, here named the “Agitato” motive, shown in Example 7.8c.

Example 7.8c. Liszt, *Hunnenschlacht*, Rehearsal C, “Agitato” motive

**C**

1. V. *molto sf*

2. V. *molto sf*

Vla. *agitato*  
*p stacc.*

Vc. *p stacc.*  
*arco*

D. B. *p stacc.*

<sup>55</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 160. The orchestration of the theme also differs from that of the previous themes. The chant appears in the organ, trumpets, and trombones; in Example 7.8a, it is present only in the tenor trombones. The trombone’s association with the church immediately lends a religious character. Most organs are onstage, but for this symphonic poem Liszt specifies an organ behind the stage, which can be associated with the music existing beyond the earthly realm.

The contrasting motive comprises a series of *staccato* rhythmic patterns marked *crescendo* with a chromatic motion, concluding with a quintuplet flourish. The constant reiteration of this motive moves the music forward. Amidst this driving rhythmic force, Liszt makes the *Crux fidelis* enter abruptly, immediately creating a stark chasm and contrast between the two. The contrast is quite apparent on the surface: the motive is short, *staccato*, and driving, whereas the theme is longer, *marcato*, and conjunct with a sense of calmness. This contrast is used to heighten a sense of “disconnection” between the *Crux fidelis* and the agitated motive, which in turn highlights the opposition between Christianity and barbarism.<sup>56</sup> The simultaneity of the contrasting textures also represents the two incessant battles, “one on Earth and one in the air,” as Liszt expressed in his letter of 1879. In his two-piano arrangement, the two pianos embody the two layers of battles, intensifying the “disconnection” between the chant and its contrasting accompaniment.

## Conclusion

The discussions of Part II have helped reorient the focus on Liszt’s two-piano arrangements from a broad context—within the generic term “piano arrangements” other than those for solo piano—to more specific contexts in order to illuminate the significance, individuality, and particularity of Liszt’s oeuvre. On a surface level, Liszt’s act of arranging his own orchestral compositions immediately conveys self-promotion as a primary purpose. On a deeper level, however, his two-piano arrangements were situated uniquely in the midst of the development of the medium during the second half of the century by their relatively large quantity, meticulous approach, and virtuosic

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<sup>56</sup> Fallon-Ludwig, “Significance,” 161–62.

characteristics. Moreover, Liszt had a particular relationship with the medium through his overt predilection for his two-piano versions over their four-hand counterparts, his far more scrupulous approach to the former, and his performance testimonies that were almost exclusively centered on the former, in contrast with the rare mentions of the latter. The performance anecdotes about public concerts, in particular, helped define his arrangements as virtuosic, independent, and concert compositions playable only by professional pianists.

Liszt was well aware of both the advantages and the disadvantages that an arranger can draw from the resources of two pianos. While exploiting a fuller, richer, and wider range of sound on two keyboards, Liszt clearly acknowledged the possibility of ostensible advantages, which at the same time turn into potential detriments. To take but one example, despite the availability of the two keyboards, Liszt did not attempt to clutter his piano score by including more notes than in his solo-piano arrangement. The addition of notes is, in fact, the least frequently used method in his transferral throughout his two-piano arrangements, although it appears judiciously in the passages intended for particular effects such as the amplification and simulation of orchestral sound. Liszt fully comprehended what each of the pianists is capable of with his or her ten fingers, only two hands, making a parallel with the soloist's capacity in a solo-piano arrangement, while simultaneously not hesitating to push himself to explore what only the medium of the two pianos could accomplish.

From this knowledge of the new medium emerges Liszt's judicious treatment of the two pianos in the manner of distribution, layout, and interaction. His distribution of the material between the pianos extends beyond simple dichotomies between theme and

accompaniment and between strings and woodwinds. It is used more effectively to heighten the salient contrasts of the model in different levels of dynamics, articulation, and character, and also to respond to the changes in key, texture, and orchestration of the original (as in Examples 7.1 and 7.2 from his *Mazeppa* arrangement). In this rendering, the use of the two pianos also helps to heighten the simultaneity of the differing articulations and characters of individual voices, to make it more visible and audible than on one keyboard in performance, and thus to create a different type of hearing experience in the audience.

Liszt also does not merely adhere to the delineation of the orchestral texture but instead offers his own layout to explore fully both the independence and combination of each role of the pianists (as in Example 7.3 from his *Les Préludes*). His layout immediately contributes to his individuality as a creative arranger but at the same time shows his underlying conscientiousness in an attempt to intensify the characteristic features of the original. Moreover, Liszt's distribution of the material on special occasions draws attention to its distinctive effects resulting from the arranger's astute coordination of the pianos by telescoping a visual, aural, and tactile movement from one piano to the other, creating a new experience for the audience (as in Example 7.4 from the opening of his *Les Préludes*), and by offering a uniquely challenging performance to the pianists (as in Example 7.5 from his *Dante*).

Furthermore, the impulse behind certain types of Liszt's transferral techniques is his response to the programmatic references of the original symphonic poems. The ostensibly dazzling virtuosic figurations Liszt deployed appear unique, reinvigorated, and deliberately designed when we correlate them with a particular orchestral effect and



programmatic reference (Example 7.1 from his *Mazeppa*). The salient features of the opposing themes and their struggle become more heightened, poignant, and even revitalized by Liszt's highly characteristic use of the pianos in layout and division, once again conflating a visual, aural, and tactile effect and thus imparting to the audience a new type of hearing experience in the new medium (Examples 7.6 and 7.7 from his *Hunnenschlacht*).

Liszt continued to develop as a pre-eminent arranger-composer in his Weimar years prominently through his two-piano arrangements. During these years he never abandoned his commitment to being a “conscientious” arranger, as he set out to be from his earliest *partitions*.<sup>57</sup> Just as his individuality already made his earlier solo-piano arrangements stand out as innovative in the midst of the repertoire in his time, his distinctive approach to the two-piano arrangement situated his oeuvre in the vanguard of that medium's development. Although the simultaneous presentation of the two sides of conscientiousness and individuality serves as an overarching theme that relates his solo and two-piano arrangements, it is fruitful to delve further into some recurring patterns of techniques in transferral and the underlying aesthetics of those techniques. The next chapter therefore helps to synthesize what we have observed through the selected examples of each group of repertoire by categorizing certain techniques into particular kinds of aesthetic impetus and raising issues that recur throughout those techniques, particularly the performer-arranger-composer dynamic in Liszt's transferrals and the complementary concepts of fidelity and creativity.

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<sup>57</sup> For his resolution to become a “conscientious” arranger, see his preface to the arrangement of Beethoven's Fifth symphony in Chapter 2.

## Part III

### Liszt's Pianistic Solutions for Cimbalom Sounds, Techniques, and Effects in his Rhapsodies

Scholars of Hungarian music have emphasized how “faithfully” Liszt attempts to emulate the elements of Hungarian popular Gypsy bands and to “reproduce” existing tunes and the style of their playing in his Rhapsodies I–XV, lending the impression that it is “as if we heard Gypsy ensembles in them.”<sup>1</sup> One of the issues that subsequently arise is: how “faithfully” did Liszt render the Gypsy-band performance in these highly virtuosic piano rhapsodies, which are prevailingly regarded as indulging in showmanship? More importantly for our focus on Liszt’s reworking methods, in comparison with his earlier orchestral arrangements, what is the meaning of his fidelity to the borrowed material and his creativity in his pianistic rendering?

A number of scholars in Hungarian music have developed a systematic approach to certain characteristics of Hungarian Gypsy-band music by classifying them into categories of rhythmic and melodic features, harmonic peculiarities, formal structure, and techniques associated with distinctive instruments.<sup>2</sup> As this method has developed,

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<sup>1</sup> From Bálint Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, trans. Fred Macnicol (Budapest: Corvina, 1978), 114–16; *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, ed. Zoltán Gárdonyi and István Szelényi (Kassel: Bärenreiter; Budapest: Editio Musica, 1972–73), x, respectively. For the information of sources tunes, see the Introduction, p. 17, n. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Bellman, “Toward a Lexicon” (1991) and *Style hongrois* (1993); Pethő, “*Style hongrois*” (2000); Loya, *Liszt’s Transcultural Modernism* (2011); Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music* (2013). Rhythmic features include dotted rhythms, decorative triplets, accented short-long, *bokázó* (“clicking of heels,” a characteristic cadential figure), *spondee* (two longs) accented short-long, *alla zoppa* (“limping” syncopation in duple meter; accented short-long-short). For more specifics, see Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, Table 4-4 at 174 and her meticulous analysis and discussion, 175–94. Melodic features include the *kuruc* fourth (fourth-leaping theme-head), pendular motif (in combination with *kuruc* fourth dotted rhythms with ties), wide leaps to lower notes, quick repeated leaps, and accented syncopated leaps. Harmonic elements include Gypsy scale, particular intervals such as augmented second and raised fourth

recent scholars of Hungarian music have reoriented the prevailingly shallow assessments of Liszt's Rhapsodies towards a level of artistic, aesthetic, and stylistic significance by illuminating how the Hungarian Gypsy style deeply and fundamentally affected his compositional thinking. To take one example, in Rhapsody No. 14, Liszt preserves a speeding-up process toward the end of a piece in a slow-fast (*lassú-friss*) structure, common in Hungarian Gypsy-style music, yet simultaneously incorporates a number of contrasting slower and faster sections, carefully suspending the slower sections and thus making the faster ones more effective.<sup>3</sup> The famous motive of the Rhapsody is also constructed on two basic rhythms associated with the Hungarian Gypsy style.<sup>4</sup> The finale of the Rhapsody encapsulates various features idiomatic to Hungarian Gypsy-music style, including repetitions of small phrases, *glissandi* and virtuosity, minor scales, and sudden key alterations.<sup>5</sup> Liszt also refers to a particular performance style of the Gypsy band in which the violin retains its modal independence, generating a bass that moves in parallel octaves to the violin's main melodic notes.<sup>6</sup>

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scale degree (in the major mode), emphasis on fifth scale degree as much as tonic, and sudden shift to remote keys. For more specifics, see Loya's theorization of the "*verbunkos* modality," in her *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 39–56. Formal structure includes a slow-fast form (*lassú-friss-figura* pattern; *figura*, a short coda-like section); techniques associated with particular instruments include the violinist's virtuosic playing and rhapsodic embellishments; evocation of the cimbalom (e.g., tremolos, arpeggios, repeated notes); *Dűvő*: adaptation of string instruments (e.g., two heavy chords).

<sup>3</sup> For the structure of his Rhapsodies, Liszt adheres to the *lassú-friss* scheme throughout, yet simultaneously transforms it for his own purposes. The scheme can be found in Nos. 1, 2, 7, 10, 11 and 13. No. 15 (the *Rákóczy* March) develops the basic structure with the addition of an introduction, transitional sections, and a coda. The cadenza-like transitional section often suspends local moments to interrupt the slow-fast pattern, as in the case of No. 10. In No. 7, a brief slow part acts like an introduction. Other formal structures are also found, as in Nos. 4 and 8, which consist of three main sections, yet preserving a gradual increase in tempo. In No. 6, the slow-fast pattern is segmented and interrupted by other sections in different tempi, beginning in moderate tempo, then fast, but followed by slow, and a rubato part, ending with a faster section. Thematic reappearances also blur the slow-fast scheme, as in No. 12 with an interruption of the return of the first theme and No. 9 (*Pest Carnival*) with frequent thematic returns.

<sup>4</sup> The two rhythms are "Iambic" (short-long pattern) and "choriambic" (long-short-short-long pattern). See Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 176–77.

<sup>5</sup> For further harmonic elements in detail, see Loya, *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 142–52.

<sup>6</sup> Loya, *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 143–51.

Although Liszt borrowed many musical parameters from Hungarian Gypsy-style music, one element that has not been discussed in detail in the previous literature is his relationship with cimbalom playing. Throughout his Rhapsodies, Liszt focuses on the distinctive sound and effect of the cimbalom, successfully capturing the multifaceted aspects of the instrument's playing in his creative pianistic renderings, as if vividly portraying the cimbalom player. The discussions of Part III proceed in two chapters, Chapters 8 and 9. Chapter 8 provides contextual dimensions for understanding the cimbalom as an instrument, Liszt's relationship with the instrument, and some fundamental techniques idiomatic to it. The focus of Part III is on Chapter 9, which delves into Liszt's reworking methods that emulate the cimbalom's unique sounds and techniques, as well as the instrument's interaction with others on occasion, bringing actual Gypsy-band performance into play.

Comparing Liszt's Rhapsodies with his orchestral arrangements, as addressed earlier in the Introduction, reveals a completely different relationship between the borrowed material and the reworking. While his orchestral arrangements are drawn from a clear sense of authorial presence and predetermined published scores by Western European composers, the source material of his Rhapsodies represents a kind of dialogue between sources available to us and the performance practice of Hungarian-Gypsy music. In addition, his meticulousness dominates in his orchestral arrangements, whereas showcasing virtuosity comes to the forefront in his Rhapsodies. Even though Liszt relies on entirely different source material as well as a different nature of the music in his Rhapsodies, the same underlying aesthetic of his reworking continues in many instances of his renderings of cimbalom playing. Just as in his orchestral arrangements Liszt shows

his careful attention to the distinctive effects and sounds of instruments, the same impulse behind his reworking continues in his focus on the cimbalom. And just as many examples of his reworkings of orchestral compositions demonstrate that his scrupulous approach to the effects of the instrument(s), including string tremolos and the timpani rolls, motivates his search for effective and creative renderings in pianistic terms, the same line of reasoning can be extrapolated to his renderings of cimbalom playing. As musical analyses will further elucidate, his reworkings of cimbalom playing provide effective correspondence, comparison, and contrast with those of his orchestral arrangements with respect to the fidelity–creativity dynamic.

## Chapter 8

### Liszt's Relationship with the Cimbalom

#### The Cimbalom: Its History

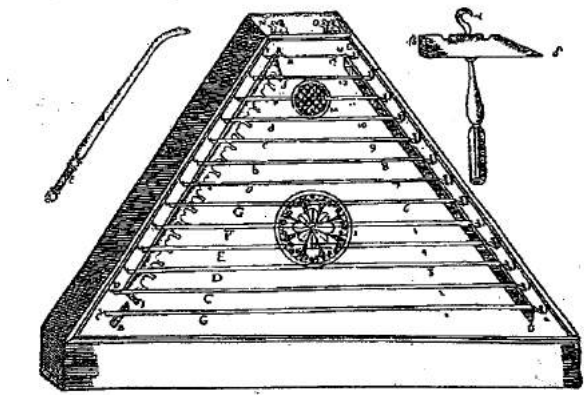
The cimbalom was descended from a traditional Persian instrument, the *santür*, and also closely related to the dulcimer as found in England and the *Hackbrett* in Germany.<sup>1</sup> The cimbalom is a type of expanded dulcimer, a large trapezoidal box with strings stretched across a wooden sounding board, one to four strings for each note. It is played with small mallets or hammers, thus also called “hammered dulcimer” (see Figure 8.1).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For the literature on the dulcimer and cimbalom, see *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Dulcimer” by David Kettlewell, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 15 February 2015; Kettlewell, “The Dulcimer” (PhD. diss., Loughborough University of Technology, 1976); Paul M. Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2001); Laurence D. Kaptain, “The Hungarian Cimbalom,” *Percussive Notes* 28, no. 5 (June 1990): 8; John Leach, “The Cimbalom,” *Music & Letters* 53, no. 2 (April 1972): 134–36; John Astaire, “Searching for the Hungarian Cimbalom” (DMA document, Indiana University, 2010); János Manga, “The Cimbalom and Gypsy Music,” in *Hungarian Folk Songs and Folk Instruments* (Budapest: Corvina Press, 1988), 3rd rev. ed., 54–58; Robert Mandel, “Hammered Dulcimer,” in *Hungarian Folk Instruments* (Budapest: Kossuth, 2008), 48–55. For the distinction between the *doulcemèr* in France and the *Hackbrett* in Germany, see Gifford, *Hammered Dulcimer*, 26–27.

<sup>2</sup> The term “hammered dulcimer” has been used to avoid confusion with a “psaltery” that involves a plucking technique and the “Appalachian” dulcimer, a distinct instrument with fretted melody strings. Many scholars nevertheless use the plain term “dulcimer” for an instrument played with hammers.

Figure 8.1. The Cimbalom<sup>3</sup>



In spite of the Persian origin, the instrument became associated with the national music of Hungary, Romania, and neighboring countries; its association with the Hungarian style became pronounced through its use by wandering Hungarian Gypsy bands.<sup>4</sup>

The Hungarian cimbalom was an essential constituent of a Gypsy ensemble as both a melodic and a harmonic instrument. Some aspects of the instrument reflect the influence of Western European art music, because the typical instrumentation of a Gypsy band is “basically European” with two violins, cimbalom, and bass.<sup>5</sup> As the cimbalom was imported into Hungary in the mid-seventeenth century, musicians incorporated it into the basso continuo in the standard Baroque trio-sonata texture of two violins and a bass line.<sup>6</sup> It was professional Hungarian Gypsy musicians who absorbed and adapted this new type of instrumentation. Sárosi remarks that the ensemble led by Panna Czinka (d.

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<sup>3</sup> Farkas Gyöngyi, *A Cimbalom Története: Dávid zsoltáraitól az európai hangversenytermekig* [*A Cimbalom History: David's Psalms to the European Concert Halls*] (Budapest: Gemini, 1996), 151.

<sup>4</sup> Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 108.

<sup>5</sup> For the phrase “basically European,” see Sárosi, “Gypsy Musicians,” 23. For the general aspects of a Gypsy band, see the introduction of this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 106–8.

1772)—whom Sárosi called “the first proper Gypsy band in history”—consisted of such four members: a *primás* (a leader playing the violin), another violin playing *kontra* in accompaniment, cimbalom, and bass.<sup>7</sup> Gifford hypothesizes that although the cimbalom had already appeared in Hungary, the Hungarian Gypsy association with the instrument is derived from the instrumentation of the Baroque trio sonata.<sup>8</sup> One of the sources of evidence, provided by Gifford, is a Hungarian painting around 1760 that depicts “Hungarian dancing to two ensembles, one a Jewish group with two violins and cimbalom, the other a Gypsy trio with two violins and cello.”<sup>9</sup> In this regard, the cimbalom, like the violin, is not a solely a folk instrument in the strict sense.<sup>10</sup> The new type of instrumentation prompted the new musical style, to which the Gypsy-band musicians immediately responded, cultivating a new musical taste in the audience. From this moment on, the role of Gypsy musicians and their music are indispensable in understanding the development of the Hungarian cimbalom.

One of the earliest appearances of the cimbalom in Western art music is closely related to the accomplishments of the hammered dulcimer virtuoso Pantaleon Hebenstreit (1668–1750). He played a crucial role in the development of the dulcimer and its cultivation at European courts during the 1710s and 1720s.<sup>11</sup> He developed the hammered dulcimer of the time, which was small and lap-held or tabletop, into a large

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<sup>7</sup> Sárosi, “Gypsy Musicians,” 11; *Gypsy Music*, 66, 71. A further discussion of a few renowned Gypsy bands will be present in the following section below.

<sup>8</sup> Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 112–3.

<sup>9</sup> Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 113.

<sup>10</sup> Leach, “Cimbalom,” 139.

<sup>11</sup> For the discussion of Pantaleon, see *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Hebenstreit [Hebestreitt], Pantaleon” by Dieter Härtwig and Christian Ahrens, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 15 February 2015; Hugo Riemann, “Pantaleon,” *Hugo Riemann Musik Lexikon* (Berlin: M. Hesse, 1929), 1338; Sarah E. Hanks, “Pantaleon’s Pantalon,” *Musical Quarterly* 55, no. 2 (April 1969): 215–27; Ahrens, “Pantalon Hebenstreit und die Frühgeschichte des Hammerklaviers,” *Beiträge zur Musikwissenschaft* 29, no. 1 (1987): 37–48.



and heavy instrument, called the *pantalon*, after him.<sup>12</sup> More importantly, his pantalon was fully chromatic except for the lowest octave, in contrast with the previously diatonic instrument; it was considered an unmatched technical advance in the development of the instrument until a true chromatic cimbalom was invented by Arthur Schunda in 1874.<sup>13</sup>

It is difficult to provide an accurate description of Hebenstreit's pantalon, partly because of the varying reports by contemporary commentators; among them, the description of John George Keysler in 1730 when he saw the pantalon in Dresden is considered one of the clearest statements about of the instrument.<sup>14</sup> His description of the strings particularly helps to explain the delicate and colorful timbres elicited from the instrument: "The strings on one side of the instrument are of cat-gut, and on the other of [metal] wire."<sup>15</sup> Sarah E. Hanks provides a further description of the strings of the pantalon: it contains "two soundboards lying back to back, the one strung with gut strings for the *piano* sound and the other strung with [metal] strings for the *forte* sound."<sup>16</sup> The gut strings particularly produce a warm, rich, and colorful tone quality with profuse overtones when they are played.<sup>17</sup> Hebenstreit's pantalon thus provided an opportunity

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<sup>12</sup> Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 220–22; Härtwig and Ahrens, "Hebenstreit, Pantaleon"; Gifford, *Hammered Dulcimer*, 165–67. For the name, the Court of Louis XIV was impressed enough at Hebenstreit's performance in 1705 to name the instrument the "pantaleon" after the inventor. Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 217; Gifford, *Hammered Dulcimer*, 166; Leach, "The Dulcimer," *Consort* 25 (1968–69): 390.

<sup>13</sup> Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 218; Astaire, "Searching," 26. Schunda's concert cimbalom will be discussed below.

<sup>14</sup> There exists no surviving instruments or precise illustrations. For further varied physical descriptions of the instrument, see Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 219–22; Härtwig and Ahrens, "Hebenstreit, Pantaleon," *Grove*; Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 167.

<sup>15</sup> Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 220.

<sup>16</sup> Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 218; also see a similar description of Johan Adam Hiller (1770) quoted in Ahrens, "Pantalon Hebenstreit," 41.

<sup>17</sup> For the gut strings, see "String Making," in Walter Kolneder, *The Amadeus Book of the Violin: Construction, History, and Music* (Portland, OR: Amadeus Press, 1998), 48–52.

for the artist to exploit his instrument's capabilities of delicate timbral and dynamic qualities.

As a virtuoso dulcimer player, although he is little known today, Hebenstreit dazzled audiences all over Europe. His reputation was noted by contemporary German composers and commentators, including Johann Kuhnau, the Bach family, Telemann, Fux, and Johann Mattheson.<sup>18</sup> Kuhnau reported his fascination with the unheard-of-sound from Hebenstreit's pantalon playing in a letter of 1717 to Mattheson:

Finally Mons. Pantalon made his leaps, and after he had exhibited his musical treasury of preludes, fantasies, fugues, and all sorts of *caprices* with the bare sticks, he then bound the sticks with cotton and played a *partie*. Thereupon the Count was utterly beside himself; he led me out of his room toward the hall, listened from a distance, and said: "Why, how can that be? I have been to Italy [and renowned musical centers], have heard what beauty there is in music, but the likes of this my ears have never heard."<sup>19</sup>

Kuhnau also witnessed that Hebenstreit had expanded the technical challenges of the cimbalom. He performed the "all sorts of *caprices* with the bare sticks," which give an impression not only of the rapidly moving mallets in a physical and visual dimension but also of the stunning techniques he deployed on a compositional level. The mallets that are used to strike the instrument themselves demand a high degree of technical artistry. In order to achieve a proper striking angle, the player is required to manage a notch attached to a wooden mallet for his index finger and the mallet's intricate

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<sup>18</sup> Hebenstreit had worked in the court of Eisenach from 1706 on, during which time Telemann as Kapellmeister in 1709 praised his mastery of not only the Pantalon but also the violin. He established his reputation particularly in Dresden as court chamber musician and pantalonist in 1714, with an income of more than that of Sebastian Bach in Leipzig. Wilhelm Friedemann Bach's acquaintance with Hebenstreit occurred in Dresden where he held a position as an organist from 1733 to 1747. Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 217–18. For further related reports and anecdotes, see the same article throughout.

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 216; Ahrens, "Pantalon Hebenstreit," 41; and Astaire, "Searching," 27. The original source is Johann Mattheson, *Critica musica* (Hamburg: author, 1725), II, 236f.

movements.<sup>20</sup> The technical demands also involve the player's ability to use the mallets elastically with the flexibility of his wrist.

It is also intriguing that Hebenstreit exploited different types of coverings for his mallets, not only the "bare sticks" but also "sticks with cotton." Prior to Schunda's concert cimbalom in the 1870s, Gypsy cimbalom players had commonly used wooden-tipped mallets to strike the cimbalom strings; the tone color produced by the lightweight wooden hammers was bright, thin, and percussive.<sup>21</sup> It was a modern tendency to create a softer sound for the cimbalom hammer by wrapping the end of the hammers in cotton, wool, or felt.<sup>22</sup> Considering the evolution of the hammers, Hebenstreit's use of the cotton sticks can be conceived of as exceptional in the development of the instrument.<sup>23</sup> More importantly, the cotton-covered mallets, which transform the previously thin and percussive sound into a softer one, would have been more suitable for the four-part European ensemble setting into which the cimbalom was absorbed and adopted (as discussed earlier). The different types of coverings could have helped further to produce kaleidoscopic timbres when they are combined with different types of strings made of gut or metal on Hebenstreit's instrument.

Hebenstreit's mastery of the technical difficulties involved in pantalon playing is also evident in another report from Kuhnau in his letter of 1717: "the pantaloons (sic) requires a tremendous amount of practice; only a few students [of Hebenstreit] will take up playing it and many of those will soon abandon it, finding unsurpassable

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<sup>20</sup> Kaptain, "Hungarian Cimbalom," 9.

<sup>21</sup> Grimes, "Evolution," 27; Leach, "The Cimbalom," 138.

<sup>22</sup> Grimes, "Evolution," 27; Leach, "The Cimbalom," 138.

<sup>23</sup> Mandel, "Hammered Dulcimer," 50, claims that Hebenstreit was the first to wrap the ends of the hammers with soft material such as fabric or leather.

difficulties.”<sup>24</sup> By expanding the technical dimension of the instrument, Hebenstreit eventually contributed to the development of the instrument in the realm of art music; otherwise, the instrument had often been cultivated in taverns of the time and incorporated into simple musical transcription.<sup>25</sup>

It is noteworthy that the musical genres through which Hebenstreit exhibited his virtuosity included “preludes, fantasies, fugues,” all of which are related to the concept of “*capriccio*.” The *capriccio* as a term or genre—although there exists no single overall meaning—was generally associated with the tradition of improvising or “preluding,” used as synonymous with fantasia as a free multi-sectional piece, or else it referred to a fugal or imitative idea with short motives.<sup>26</sup> Even in the context of nineteenth-century keyboard literature, the term was not used in a consistent manner. It denoted a bravura piece made by interweaving preexisting thematic material as in a potpourri, or a witty character piece in a short repetitive rhythmic pattern, or it continued the historical meaning of a free, improvisatory fantasia.<sup>27</sup>

Whether the term is attached to a piece in a slow or fast tempo, its essential nature was an emphasis on ideas rather than form—most of all, the concept of the performer’s whim and freedom unfettered by rigid form, meter, and figuration. These characteristics would have been suitable for capturing the multi-faceted sounds of the cimbalom unfolding in a wide spectrum; moreover, the free style made it possible to facilitate a

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<sup>24</sup> Mattheson, *Critica musica*, II, 236; quoted in Leach, “The Dulcimer,” 390–91; Astaire, “Searching,” 29.

<sup>25</sup> For the tavern setting of the hammered dulcimer, see Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 108.

<sup>26</sup> The meaning of *capriccio* and its relation to Liszt’s designation of a *capriccio* will be further discussed in Chapter 9.

<sup>27</sup> Seppo Saari, “The Capriccio in Keyboard Music,” in *Skriftserie fra Institut for musikk og teater, Universitetet i Oslo* (Oslo: Historisk-filosofiske fakultet Universitetet i Oslo, [1993]), 306–11; Eric Frederick Jensen, “The Piano Capriccio, 1830–1860” (MA thesis, Eastman School of Music, 1975).

*rubato*-style performance manner of cimbalom playing, immediately capturing the improvising cimbalom virtuoso. In Liszt's case, in a few instances of his cimbalom renderings he also uses the term *a capriccio*—which refers to a specific performance manner associated with the *capriccio*. He seems to intend two contrasting characters: the rhapsodic style for the majority of the examples, and a witty character on some other occasions.

More importantly, Hebenstreit's performing repertoire suggests he would have seen the potential of the many similarities between the pantalon and keyboard with respect to sounds and effects. The genres such as preludes and fantasies mentioned above are related to keyboard compositions. In fact, most of Hebenstreit's music was reliant on improvisation or free transcription of other works, especially those for keyboard, on the pantalon.<sup>28</sup> It should be noted that the pantalon influenced the development of the fortepiano in the 1710s and 1720s.<sup>29</sup> Christoph Gottlieb Schröter (1699–1782), one of the early piano builders in Germany and Austria, claimed to have invented his keyboard in 1717 with the “two hammer-action models”—one striking the strings from below and the other from above.<sup>30</sup> The inspiration for the hammer action operated from Schröter's keyboard was a performance by Hebenstreit.<sup>31</sup> The piano builder in particular called the down-striking hammer action the “pantalon-action” by analogy with the manner of performance on a pantalon.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Härtwig and Ahrens, “Hebenstreit”; Hanks, “Pantaleon's Pantalon,” 224.

<sup>29</sup> Ahrens, “Pantalon Hebenstreit.”

<sup>30</sup> David Rowland, “The Piano to c. 1770,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Piano*, 10.

<sup>31</sup> Ahrens, “Pantalon Hebenstreit”; Hanks, “Pantaleon's Pantalon,” 225.

<sup>32</sup> Hanks, “Pantaleon's Pantalon,” 225.

Having benefitted from Schröter's models and also Cristofori's description of the fortepiano (written by Scipione Maffei in 1711), another German keyboard builder, Gottfried Silbermann, designed a particular device called a "pantalon stop" (*Pantalonzug*), intended to imitate the pantalon's sustaining sound.<sup>33</sup> In fact, one of the distinctive properties of the pantalon was a resonating sound because of its lack of a damper mechanism, creating a blending of sounds when new strings were struck while the previous ones were still sounding. This resonating sound on the pantalon prompted early piano builders to introduce a stop or knee-lever that removed the dampers from the strings (it is much more conveniently managed by the right pedal on a modern piano), evoking the undamped sound of the pantalon.<sup>34</sup>

Aside from the emulation of the blending of sounds, the early piano builders adapted the way pantalon players silenced the resonating strings. When the pantalon player desired to stop the sounding of the strings, he had to use his hands and even forearms or coat sleeves in order to damp the strings, momentarily making his physical position stray from that of the current musical discourse; this is probably the reason why Kuhnau stated that "M. Pantaleon made his leaps" in his report cited above.<sup>35</sup> To make the stop device more practical, the early builders would have compensated for the strenuous efforts required for the pantalon performer. It is evident that the early piano builders such as Schröter and Silbermann wished to capture the distinctively delicate timbres of the pantalon as well as its demanding technique on their keyboards. The pantalon-action and the pantalon-stop reveal how these builders attempted to emulate the

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<sup>33</sup> Rowland, "The Piano to c. 1770," 10; Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 226.

<sup>34</sup> Rowland, "Piano to c. 1770," 10; Hanks, "Pantaleon's Pantalon," 226.

<sup>35</sup> For the mention of the use of coat sleeves, see Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 46.

admired sounds of the pantalon and adapt the technical challenges involved in the pantalon playing to their instruments.

It would not be going too far to claim that the close relationship between development of the pantalon and fortepiano paved the way for further interplay between the cimbalom and piano in the piano adaptations of the instrument in the Western art-music tradition. The cimbalom and the piano are both hammered instruments that create percussive sounds and effects. The distinctive timbre of the cimbalom would have been less demanding for arrangers, including Liszt, to render on the piano than on other instruments. The piano in the time of Liszt's predecessors such as Haydn and Schubert—who set up the stage for the evocation of the cimbalom in their piano compositions—sounded closer to a cimbalom than does today's piano in its distinctive timbres that may be characterized as sharper, thinner, more percussive, and metallic.<sup>36</sup> Thus Western art-composers would have observed its potential for approximating the cimbalom. Although Liszt's pianos from the 1830s were more expanded in size, volume, and register than Haydn's fortepiano, they still produced lighter, brighter, and more percussive and delicate sounds than those of modern pianos.<sup>37</sup> Liszt would have seen the piano as the perfect candidate for approximating the cimbalom, expanding what his predecessors had done to forge his individual idioms in his Rhapsodies.

To conclude this discussion of Hebenstreit's pantalon and his performing mastery, there is no clear-cut connection between his reputation and the dulcimer's development in

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<sup>36</sup> Rowland, "Piano to c. 1770" and "Pianos and Pianists, c. 1770-c. 1825," 7–21 and 22–39, respectively.

<sup>37</sup> For Liszt's pianos including the Erard, see Rowland, "Piano since c. 1825," 45; for Liszt's Erard piano, see Alfred Kanwischer, "Beethoven's Erard Piani," 39, n. 22, in Alfred J. Hipkins, *A Description and History of the Pianoforte*, 3rd ed. (London, 1929; reprint, Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1975), 39.

Western art music, but his proficiency in pantaleon playing would have helped performers and composers to regard the instrument from a new perspective and adapt it to an artistic purpose. The discussion of Hebenstreit's technical artistry helps to understand the case of Liszt. Just as Hebenstreit deployed technical tricks with his two mallets on the cimbalom, musical examples of Liszt's evocations of the cimbalom in Chapter 9 demonstrate how he explored all the possibilities of rendering it with his two hands on the keyboard. In addition, just as Hebenstreit promoted the dulcimer's status, Liszt exalted the marginalized position of the cimbalom player (and Gypsy-band players in general) by further developing cimbalom evocations that went beyond the conventional types of rendering that frequently appeared in the piano arrangements of Hungarian Gypsy music from the 1780s and as practiced by his Western art-music predecessors.

### **The Cimbalom in a Few Outstanding Hungarian Gypsy Bands around 1790**

The history of the cimbalom discussed above has demonstrated that the earlier types of cimbalom such as dulcimer and pantalon had already appeared in the classical tradition: musicians incorporated the instrument into a Baroque trio-sonata texture, and court musicians such as Hebenstreit explored the timbral and technical possibilities of the pantalon fully, while simultaneously motivating makers to create a particular device to emulate the distinctive effects of the instrument on the early keyboard. At the same time the instrument already appeared as a major part of Gypsy ensembles from the 1760s on when they had presumably come to absorb, adopt, and practice the imported four-part instrumentation. The following paragraphs explore the cimbalom specifically used in a



few famous Hungarian Gypsy bands who began to earn their fame in the area of Vienna around 1790, as represented in János Bihari and his band.

It is important to note that the Gypsy ensembles who drew the attention of the world were the most outstanding, not like the majority of Gypsy bands.<sup>38</sup> The renowned ensembles were active in an urbanized area in the upper class of society, for whom they frequently performed in front of aristocratic audiences and were invited in public and private celebration and by whom their music was recognized and appreciated.<sup>39</sup>

The first Gypsy musicians whose names are known to us appeared in the late eighteenth century from the area around Vienna. The *Magyar Kurir* reported in 1787 a performance by Hungarian Gypsy musicians, one of the *Galánta* ensembles, at an inn in Vienna:

Not long ago a band of five musicians, with black hair and white teeth, arrived in Vienna from Galánta [a small town near Pozsony], whose music-making, without the printed music, was listened to with amazement. . . . [They] play with such great proficiency that the inn where these people perform is full with people gathered in amazement, and they do the innkeeper a lot of good.<sup>40</sup>

Another anecdote about a recruiting Gypsy band, as reported by Count József Gvadányi in 1791, includes a description of a cimbalom player who carried a small portable-sized instrument and put it on his lap in a five-member band.

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<sup>38</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 68, n. 99.

<sup>39</sup> Sárosi, “Gypsy Musicians,” 14–15, points out that by the 1800s there were also villages that could afford to have at least one or a few Gypsy musicians, who were working for the more wealthy peasants. These musicians played for festivities and, most commonly, for dances. Most of the dances that the Gypsies learned from the Hungarian upper classes were not yet familiar to the villagers. Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 39, n. 65, provides evidence that the role of Gypsy bands in more genteel dance venues began in Hungary’s Reform Era in the late 1830s, when Count István Széchenyi introduced the “Magyar” dance to polite society. Along with the aristocratic venues, Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 35, points out that important performing venues of Gypsy bands from the late eighteenth century included cafés, restaurants, dance floors, and concert halls.

<sup>40</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 68–69; also quoted in Mayes, “Reconsidering,” 166. The Gypsy musicians whose names were recorded for the first time included Mihály Barna and Panna Czinka. Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 68.

Out of the cloth cases they produced their instruments, spat on the bits of wood holding the strings. They can't read Haiden's music and yet even in the dark they play his songs.

We are ready, sir—thus they addressed me. Come on, I set off, they strolled after me. Among the tents I said: Halt! They stopped, every one of them was waiting for my command. Three of them put their violins to their ears, the cimbalom player put the cimbalom on his knees, and old fellow bent himself to his bass, everyone had got into position.

Play then, I shouted, and to be sure they drove it round, just as one can expect of them they ornamented it, they wound up their songs to the topmost tone, trilling down in one to from high to low.<sup>41</sup>

The traveling cimbalom player in a Gypsy band carried his instrument on his back, supporting it by ropes or leather straps crossed over his shoulders.<sup>42</sup> When he played it, he put it on his knees as in the 1791 description above, or a table or barrel, because the instrument does not have legs.<sup>43</sup> Figure 8.2 depicts a Gypsy cimbalom player from Galánta in the second half of eighteenth century playing the instrument on the table. Figure 8.3 portrays a wedding where the Gypsy musicians accompany (in the right corner of the picture) and the cimbalom player attempts to pull a barrel for his instrument.

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<sup>41</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 87. For the original source, Gvadányi wrote in his work *Pöstyényi Fürödés* (Bathing at Pöstyén) about the five-member band from Szeredi. The same ensemble can be recognized in his poem, published in 1791. Manga, *Hungarian Folk Songs*, 55.

<sup>42</sup> Manga, "Cimbalom and Gypsy Music," 56.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

Figure 8.2. Cimbalom player from Galánta, second half of eighteenth century<sup>44</sup>



Figure 8.3. Gypsy band in a wedding, mid-nineteenth century<sup>45</sup>



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<sup>44</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 57.

<sup>45</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 126; Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, cover page.

The common thread of the two descriptions above is that the writers were amazed at the Hungarian Gypsy musicians' performances "with such great proficiency"; the second description, in particular, notes the ornamentation as an essential improvisatory practice in performance. The two descriptions also point out that the Gypsy musicians played "without the printed music." Gypsy musicians, like many other Romany people, were illiterate and could not read musical notation, and thus their musical knowledge was reliant on learning by ear. The emphasis on spontaneity and intuition, although it requires discipline and ceaseless practice, and the art of ornamentation are both part of the concept and practice of improvisation in the actual performance of the Gypsy band, as will be further illuminated in the anecdotes of Bihari's performance below.<sup>46</sup>

János Bihari (1784–1827) and his band were renowned above all other Hungarian Gypsy musicians. He attained an enormous reputation with his ensemble, which appeared in every public and private celebration and banquet in Pest and throughout the country.<sup>47</sup> He was also invited to display his virtuosic performance in 1814 at the Vienna Congress for monarchs and statesmen.<sup>48</sup> Despite his reputation, information about his life, career, and musical training is scanty.<sup>49</sup> Nevertheless, the description of János Bihari's performances, as rendered by his first biographer Gábor Mátray, provides a valuable insight into the virtuoso Gypsy musician's art of performing, particularly in the

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<sup>46</sup> The practice of improvisation will be further discussed in relation to Liszt's rendering of cimbalom improvisation in Chapter 9.

<sup>47</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 77.

<sup>48</sup> Max Peter Baumann, "The Reflection of the Roma in European Art Music," *The World of Music* 38, no. 1 (Music of the Roma) (1996): 109.

<sup>49</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 76. From the surviving information about Bihari's career, we can see that the starting point and the center stage of his career were Pest. He formed his famous band around 1800 in Pest: Szabolcsi, *A Concise History*, 56–57.

field of ornamentation and improvisation as already observed in the two descriptions above:

Bihari was especially marked by his virtuoso performance of national music, which he freely interpreted and seemed each time to newly improvise. No matter how tumultuous his playing was—and had it been otherwise, it could not electrify a Hungarian auditorium—he did not overload with bombastic ornamentation but played certain melodies absolutely simply, but with an expression that affected every heart. He performed the *frischka-s* with a violent, intoxicating fire, the *lassan-s* with a deep, elegiac melancholy that made a deep impression even on professional musicians, who only judge from the standpoint of structure. At that time they used to repeat both the *frischka-s* and the *lassan-s*; now they seem to have concentrated all national music in the *czárdás*.<sup>50</sup>

This description pays attention to: (1) Bihari's extraordinary ability to transform a musical idea each time in his own interpretation; (2) his performative power to stir the audience's emotions, whether a melancholic and impassioned performance in the slow section (*lassú*) or a fiery and passionate one in the fast section (*friss*); and (3) his careful use of elaborations, "not overloaded with bombastic ornamentation" but his attention to the expressivity of the melody. Bihari possessed the ability to incorporate quickly and reshape elements that seemed strange and not performable.

It is significant that the musical activities of Bihari and his band all bolster the claim by a number of Hungarian music scholars, including Sárosi, that there was a strong tendency towards the assimilation of Western European art music in the development of Hungarian Gypsy music during its flourishing period.<sup>51</sup> As mentioned above, Bihari frequently appeared in front of a court audience in both Pest and Vienna. In addition to

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<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Baumann, "The Reflection of the Roma," 109. Gábor Mátray (1797–1875) was also a Hungarian composer and leading music historian of the day.

<sup>51</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 110. The "musical map" of Hungary between 1720 and 1820 was "nothing but foreign orchestras, and foreign composers, conductors and virtuosi"; Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 53.

his exquisite performances, Bihari distinguished himself as a Hungarian Gypsy-music composer by publishing many Hungarian dances. Despite a lack of formal musical training, he was credited with more than eighty compositions in three publications around 1807–11.<sup>52</sup> Bihari was not capable of notating his music, and thus his compositions were written down by other musicians.<sup>53</sup> Bihari and/or his collaborators shaped the published versions of their dances according to Viennese classical conventions.<sup>54</sup> In his later years Bihari performed not only his own or collaborative compositions but also compositions by Antal Csermák (1774?–1822) and János Lavotta (1764–1820), two of Bihari’s leading non-Gypsy contemporaries.<sup>55</sup> Csermák and Lavotta were both musically educated; the former even began his career as a violin teacher in Vienna.<sup>56</sup> Their music thus not only reflected the influence of classical art-music on Gypsy-band music but also contributed to the Western adaptation of their tradition.

The cimbalom was probably the least standard instrument but it became a fundamental feature of Gypsy bands because of its distinctive sounds and techniques. On the side of European absorption, nevertheless, the instrument assumed the role of basso continuo player to provide chordal accompaniment and fill in the harmonies, as illustrated in an excerpt from a *verbunkos* collected by László Lajtha (1892–1963) (see Example 8.1).

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<sup>52</sup> Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 58; Baumann, “The Reflection of the Roma,” 108.

<sup>53</sup> Bellman, “Toward a Lexicon,” 109.

<sup>54</sup> Mayes, “Reconsidering an Early Exoticism,” 165–66.

<sup>55</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 79. For the published sources of music by Bihari, Csermák, and Lavotta, see Géza Papp, “Die Quellen der ‘Verbunkos-Musik.’”

<sup>56</sup> *Grove Music Online*, s.v. “Csermák, Antal Gyorgy” and “Lavotta, János” by Ferenc Bónis, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 10 January 2015. Szabolcsi, *A Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 59.

Example 8.1. A *verbunkos* piece collected by László Lajtha<sup>57</sup>

The image shows a musical score for a four-piece ensemble: Violin, Viola, Cimbalom, and Bass. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 200. The Violin part is in treble clef and features a complex, fast melody with many sixteenth and thirty-second notes, including triplets and a sextuplet. The Viola part is in alto clef and provides harmonic support with chords and some melodic lines. The Cimbalom part is in treble clef and plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes. The Bass part is in bass clef and plays a simple, steady bass line. The score is divided into four measures, each with a repeat sign at the end.

At the other end of the spectrum of the instrument, its distinctive sound is understood as Hungarian Gypsy. As will be further fleshed out in musical examples below, the instrument creates salient sounds and effects, serves both melodic and harmonic roles, and thus becomes both a subservient instrument and a soloist.

It is intriguing that the music-making by a few renowned Gypsy bands active in the domain of Vienna, including Bihari's, bear witness to an important juncture of "folk" and "art" music. According to Matthew Gelbart, the distinction between "folk" and "art" music was not clear until it began to grow toward the end of the eighteenth century.<sup>58</sup> One of the decisive factors behind the division, Gelbart claims, was Enlightenment interests that redefined music with respect to its origins rather than its functions of "high" and "low," and that was used to privilege the notion of "national" music over and against

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<sup>57</sup> Leach, "The Cimbalom," Example 2, 139; the source is not clear. For a transcription in a similar texture, see László Lajtha, Bálint Sárosi, and István Csejtei, *Instrumental Music from Western Hungary: From the Repertoire of an Urban Gypsy Band* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1988), *passim*.

<sup>58</sup> Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of 'Folk Music' and 'Art Music': Emerging Categories From Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), introduction, particularly at p. 9, and Chapters 1–3.

“artificial” music.<sup>59</sup> By tracing the complex history of the terms “folk” and “art” from the 1760s to Wagner, by focusing on Scottish culture that fueled the discourse of the two terms, and by relating Scottish cases also to German musical thought and Romantic idealism that were reliant on assumptions about authenticity and simplicity, Gelbart makes an argument that the two categories often overlapped. In other words, although art music tends to become associated with classical, serious, or authored music, whereas folk music is almost synonymous with primitive, traditional, non-literate, and orally transmitted music, the binary opposition between the two categories is artificial, as Gelbart argues, and instead there exists a discursive history of the terms.

This division of “folk” and “art” happened around the same time as Gypsy-band musicians drew attention. Yet at the same time their music also became a fulcrum to lever the two aesthetic categories. The way their music was understood and perceived belonged to a “folk” category, based on stereotypical attributes of folk music, including musical illiteracy, oral transmission, non-authored works, and intuitive and spontaneous improvisation. Yet simultaneously, the music by the renowned Gypsy bands reflected the influence of the structural and harmonic elements of the European classical tradition. Sárosi remarked that in Bihari’s pieces, “painful attention is being taken that the melody should be harmonizable and the broken chord continually appears as in important melody-building element.”<sup>60</sup> In this regard, Bihari’s band and others had a close relationship with the classical tradition as practiced in the area of Vienna. The function of their music was already near to common-practice harmony, lending a different

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<sup>59</sup> Gelbart, *The Invention*, Chapters 1 throughout and the discussion of “national” versus “cultivated” as categories in Chapter 3, 98–102.

<sup>60</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 111; also quoted and discussed in Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 38.



impression from a “folk” category, while simultaneously leaning toward an “art” category. The Gypsy-band music, understood as both “folk” and “art,” was what Liszt was exposed to from his early teens and what he drew on throughout his life, as will be further discussed in the following section of Liszt’s direct relationships with the Gypsy band in general and the cimbalom in particular.

### **Liszt’s Relationship with the Cimbalom**

Liszt’s relationship with the cimbalom can be understood largely in three aspects: (1) Liszt’s engagement with the Hungarian Gypsy-style tradition practiced by classical composers during the first half of the nineteenth century, (2) Liszt’s own remarks on the cimbalom in his *Des bohémiens* (1859), and (3) Liszt’s direct encounter with Hungarian Gypsy bands in general and his interest in the cimbalom in particular through his continuous relationships with cimbalom players, makers, and pedagogues from the 1870s on.

#### *Stylistic representation of the cimbalom in Western art music*

The development of the cimbalom happened as Gypsy-band performances were gaining popularity; yet more importantly, for this purpose, the fashion for evocations of the cimbalom was attached to evocations of “Hungarian-Gypsy style.”<sup>61</sup> From this tendency emerged the reason that premier classical-tradition composers played crucial roles in the development of stylistic representations of the cimbalom. The characteristic textures and

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<sup>61</sup> For the examples, see Pethő, “*Style hongrois*”; Bellman, “Toward a Lexicon,” passim. Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 35–45, discusses “Gypsy music,” generally perceived as “Hungarian-Gypsy music,” among Central Europeans from the late eighteenth century on as well as Gypsy music as one of a number of national styles that became popular in the nineteenth century.

sounds of the instrument were recognized and used by Liszt's predecessors, including Haydn, Schubert, and Weber, who established the precedent of certain stylistic markers of the cimbalom in relation to the "lexicon" of the *style hongrois* upon which Liszt would have drawn.<sup>62</sup> To contextualize Liszt's responses to the cimbalom, it is essential to note how it began to appeal to Western art-music composers prior to Liszt and to explore the meaning of his own renderings.

Liszt's relationship with Schubert's *Divertissement à la hongroise*, Op. 54, in particular provides convincing evidence to demonstrate Liszt's engagement with the convention of the *style hongrois* practiced by the Viennese composer. Schubert's *Divertissement* is considered to be based on Gypsy performances the composer experienced during his trips and excursions, particularly to the countryside of Zseliz (modern-day Slovakia) in 1824.<sup>63</sup> The composition has come to represent the pinnacle of the *style hongrois* in the history of the style up to that point.<sup>64</sup> Liszt provided a "recomposed arrangement" of the second march movement of Schubert's *Divertissement* for his *Mélodies hongroises d'après Schubert*, S. 425 in 1838–39, before writing his Rhapsodies.<sup>65</sup> It is evident that Schubert's *Divertissement* furnished one of the useful

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<sup>62</sup> Among the earliest use of a dulcimer in written European art music are the parts for the instrument in the compositions of Baroque and Classical composers, including Vivaldi and Leopold Mozart; for example, the part for the "*salterio oder Hackbrett*" in Vivaldi's "*Ho nel petto un cor si forte*" (mm. 1–15) from his 1724 Opera *Il Giustino*. See Astaire, "Searching," 31–32.

<sup>63</sup> Pethő, "Style hongrois," 248–49; discussion of the *Divertissement*, 248–64.

<sup>64</sup> Pethő, "Style hongrois," 254.

<sup>65</sup> Loya, *Transcultural Modernism*, 100, focuses on the march movement of Liszt's *Mélodies hongroises d'après Schubert*, interpreting Liszt's heroic rendition as a patriotic response to the aesthetic of the Viennese *style hongrois* and thus demonstrating Liszt's mastery of the Hungarian heroic march style already in 1840 before his Rhapsodies. She emphasizes Liszt's heroic Hungarian march as an important genre, along with his arrangements of *verbunkos* pieces, in his formation of a canon of Hungarian instrumental works.

sources for Liszt to become acquainted with and align himself with the tradition of the *style hongrois*.

While there is no doubt that Liszt engaged with the Viennese *style-hongrois* tradition, at the same time he attempted to “correct” his predecessors’ attitude towards Hungarian Gypsy music. He criticized Schubert’s *Divertissement*, along with Beethoven’s approach to the repertoire, in his *Des bohémiens* of 1859:

One can convince oneself how little civilized musicians have understood the nature of *Gypsy art*, when they took an interest in it, when one sees two masters such as Beethoven and Schubert misunderstand the characteristics essentially inherent in its form. Both tried to carry over to the sphere of *their art* a few snatches of it. . . . But it is not difficult to recognize that [Schubert] and Beethoven lent but very fleeting attention to these exotic productions, that they did not consider them at all as samples revealing the new flora of an unknown zone. . . . It is obvious from the way they treated the motives they borrowed that they did not perceive an art different from all others, constructed from completely different principles, on a completely different foundation. They took the fragments that reached them as the stray and disfigured debris of rough and crude artists, and believed they gave them value by tailoring them according to our rules and methods.<sup>66</sup>

Liszt criticizes Beethoven and Schubert in part to further justify his own Hungarian-Gypsy works through both his prose writing and his musical compositions.<sup>67</sup> At the same time he made clear his dissatisfaction with their approaches to Gypsy-band music and of his resolution to rectify their misunderstanding of the repertoire.

Relating his above-mentioned criticism to the spectrum of Liszt’s arrangements under study, it recalls what he had claimed in his preface to the arrangements of Beethoven’s symphonies (Chapter 1). One of Liszt’s intentions for the monumental

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<sup>66</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 331–32; cited and trans. in Mayes, “Reconsidering an Early Exoticism,” 177, 180.

<sup>67</sup> Despite the justification, as Mayes, “Reconsidering an Early Exoticism,” 180, points out, Liszt’s assessment of the approach of many of his predecessors has merit, “for extensive stylistic exoticism in Viennese adaptations of Hungarian-Gypsy music around 1800 was the exception rather than the rule.”

project was to provide a set of “his” *partitions* that contribute to “correcting” the prevailing superficial way of handling piano arrangements, ultimately distinguishing his own versions from the contemporary ones. Locating this same impulse behind Liszt’s *partitions* and his Rhapsodies relates the two different groups of repertoire to each other, while the result of Liszt’s approach to each group is so different as to demonstrate his differing attitude toward and relationship with the model as well as the differing purposes of his reworkings, as will be further fleshed out in the next chapter.

If Schubert set a precedent for those renderings associated with the tradition of the *style hongrois*, Liszt established a historical lineage for his music while at the same time loosening its connections with the earlier convention. The later part of this section considers Schubert’s *Divertissement* again to observe several examples of the pianistic renderings of the cimbalom, which help to illuminate Liszt’s further developments in his Rhapsodies.

#### *Liszt’s own remarks on the cimbalom*

In his *Des bohémiens*, Liszt provides a description of the cimbalom that occupies the entire section on the Gypsy orchestra, as discussed below, suggesting that he regarded the instrument as essential and unique to a Gypsy band. He provides a physical description of the instrument, including its soundboard, range of strings, wooden hammers, the use of a strap around the player’s neck, and the table on which to put the instrument performance.<sup>68</sup> In addition, Liszt acknowledges the origin of the instrument and its

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<sup>68</sup> Manga, “Cimbalom and Gypsy Music,” 56. Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 368. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy Music*, 312.

variants in the tradition of European stringed instruments, all of which led him to focus on its specific use by Hungarian Gypsies.<sup>69</sup>

As shown in the description below, Liszt then shifts to the role of the cimbalom as both harmonic and melodic instrument and its resulting distinctive sounds and timbres.

This instrument is still well spread amongst the peasants of little Russia, who generally suspend it by a strap round the neck, which enables them to play without resting it upon a table. This, however, they have to do when it is desired to augment the sonority of its metallic vibrations. Like the violin, the *zymbala* lends itself to the ornamentations of little notes, trills, and runs at every organ-point.<sup>70</sup>

For the harmonic components, it creates a “highly resounding” sound and “metallic vibrations,” while for the melodic ones it displays “ornamentations” and “runs.” The ornamentation that the cimbalom player displays immediately evokes the image of an improvising cimbalom virtuoso.

Liszt continues to characterize the instrument’s role as to “double the harmony, mark the rhythm, and form the accompaniment” in interaction with other instruments:

The whole group of instruments forming a Bohemian orchestra generally serves only to double the harmony, mark the rhythm, and form the accompaniment. They consist, for the most part, of flutes, clarinets, a little brass, a violoncello, a double-bass, and as many second violins as can be obtained.<sup>71</sup>

In the excerpts below, he further explains the important role of the cimbalom in performance to serve as a principal instrument on a par with the first violin in the Gypsy ensemble. The capacities of the cimbalom as harmonic, melodic, accompanimental, and solo instrument, as discussed above, ultimately enable the cimbalom player to interact

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<sup>69</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 368. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 312.

<sup>70</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 368–69. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 312.

<sup>71</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 369. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 313.

and coordinate with the violinist. In this interaction, Liszt considered the cimbalom together with the first violin to be the soloist of the band.

The first violin and *zymbala* attract the principal interest; filling the great role of the musical drama about to be played; absolutely after the manner of the *primo uomo* and *prima donna* of the old Italian opera. They may be called the soloists of the band; if we may be allowed to borrow a term from the jargon of the spurious Bohemian of Paris.

The *zymbala* shares with the first violin the right to develop certain passages and to prolong certain variations indefinitely according to the good pleasures of the moment. He is necessarily one of those who conduct the musical poem; having either created it at leisure, or being about to improvise it at the moment; and he imposes upon others the duty of surrounding him, sustaining him, even guessing him in order to sing the same funeral hymn or give himself up to the same mad freak of joy. From time to time a violoncello or a clarinet becomes distinguished and claims a share in the prerogative of unlimited improvisation. Some few of these have acquired a certain renown; but in spite of that they remain exceptions.<sup>72</sup>

The following excerpts continue Liszt's description of the cimbalom's role to supply the rhythm and control the pace of the music in performance, as in "the acceleration or slackening of time." Moreover, he captures the image of the player's agile movement of his wooden hammers that strike the strings, just as the cimbalom virtuoso Hebenstreit displayed "all sorts of *caprices*" by using his sticks.

The first violin (whose technique sometimes differs materially from ours) unfolds all the wonders suggested by his imagination, whilst the *zymbala* supplies the rhythm, indicates the acceleration or slackening of time, as also the degree of movement. He manipulates with singular agility and as if it were a sleight-of-hand performance the little wooden hammers with which he travels over the strings, and which in this primitive piano perform the duty we assign to ivory keys.<sup>73</sup>

Liszt's description of the cimbalom was not written superficially but with great attention to the instrument. One might ask where he acquired his knowledge of it. Liszt was renowned for his persistence in obtaining what he wanted to know by studying a

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<sup>72</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 369–70. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 313.

<sup>73</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 369–70. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 313.

subject intensively or discussing it with those who knew it. The way he absorbed knowledge was thus neither “academic” nor “institutional” learning but more reliant on “direct experience.”<sup>74</sup> Although he studied the sources of modern folklore specialists with whom he was acquainted,<sup>75</sup> his learning of the instrument stemmed more from his direct encounters with lively Gypsy bands as well as his close relationship with people associated with the cimbalom.

### *Liszt’s direct encounters with Gypsy bands*

Liszt’s fascination with Hungarian Gypsy music is well documented in his letters and writing.<sup>76</sup> His encounter with a live Gypsy-band performance already occurred in his teens through a performance of Bihari’s that made an indelible impression on the eleven-year-old composer, as revealed in his praise for the outstanding Gypsy musician’s prowess in the oft-quoted letter from the 1840s:

I was just beginning to grow up when I heard this great man [Bihari] in 1822. . . . He used to play for hours on end, without giving the slightest thought to the passing of time. . . . His performances must have distilled into my soul the essence of some generous and exhilarating wine; for when I think of his playing, the emotions I then experienced were like one of those mysterious elixirs concocted in the secret laboratories of the Middle Ages.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Janita R. Hall-Swadley, “Introduction,” in *The Collected Writings of Franz Liszt*, ed. and trans. Hall-Swadley (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011), II, 6.

<sup>75</sup> See Liszt’s letters of 12 May and 3 June 1853 to Hans von Bülow, *Briefwechsel zwischen Franz Liszt und Hans von Bülow*, ed. La Mara (Leipzig, 1898); also, his letter to Louis Köhler of 16 April 1852, *Franz Liszt’s Briefe*, ed. La Mara (Leipzig, 1893), I, 104; *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, ed. Gárdonyi and Szelényi (Budapest, 1972–73), x.

<sup>76</sup> For example, Liszt enthused about Gypsy families playing and dancing for him on his visit to Hungary in a letter from 1883. See Lina Ramann, ed., *Franz Liszt’s Gesammelte Schriften*, Vol. 6 (1883), 137; quoted in Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 335. Other instances include in Walker, op. cit., 335, n. 37: Liszt also wrote to Edmund Singer that “this sort of music is, for me, a kind of opium, of which sometimes I am in great need.” La Mara, ed. *Franz Liszt’s Briefe an Seine Mutter*, vol. 1, 205; to Princess Carolyne zu Sayn-Wittgenstein he said, “You know what a special attraction this music exerts over me.” La Mara, *Franz Liszt’s Briefe*, vol. 4, 316.

<sup>77</sup> Ramann, ed., *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 6, 345–46; quoted in Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 63. Bihari’s performance was indeed heard by Beethoven, who “listened to [his] playing often . . . with great

By the mid-nineteenth century, the music of Gypsy ensembles was so popular that every town in Hungary had its own band.<sup>78</sup> Ferenc Patikárus (1827–1870) and his band, one of the leading ensembles of the time, left a memorable impression on Liszt.<sup>79</sup> 1856 reports in the *Déelibáb* (Mirage) and *Hölgyfutár* (Woman's Courier) document that Liszt was captivated by the performance of Patikárus and his band: "Liszt (as has been mentioned several times already) likes the skillful [G]ypsy musicians very much. . . . Lately, when Ferkó Patikárus and his band played to him he listened to them completely oblivious to food and drink."<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, Liszt directly interacted with Patikárus's ensembles on another occasion, joining in their performance with his piano and providing his own improvisation on the Hungarian tunes on his piano:

When on the occasion of the ceremonial lunch arranged in the Péter piano room in honor of the world famous pianist Ferkó Patikárus's moving violin music was heard, Liszt jumped up and, pulling out a piano, joined in the gypsy music. Those who were present at the celebration unanimously proclaim that the great artist never played with such enthusiasm as when after the true-to-life performance he transferred the original Hungarian tones to the piano in a brilliant improvisation.<sup>81</sup>

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pleasure." Julius Kaldy, *A History of Hungarian Music*, 18; Kaldy provides no source for this information; also cited in Mayes, "Reconsidering an Early Exoticism," 165 and n. 17. For another anecdote of Liszt's praise for Bihari's performance, see Liszt, *Die Zigeuner und ihre Musik in Ungarn*, trans. Peter Cornelius (Pest, 1861), 144, 150; cited in Baumann, "The Reflection of the Roma," 110–11.

<sup>78</sup> Gábor Mátray wrote in 1854: "It is a rare community in our country that does not have its own Gypsy musicians," quoted in Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians," 15.

<sup>79</sup> In addition to Patikárus, Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 120–27, mentions a few other outstanding Gypsy musicians: József Pityó (1790–1888), a horn player in the military orchestra, and the leader in the orchestra of a recruiting unit in the county of Liptó; Jancsi Sági Balog (1803–1876), who had played in Bihari's group and who he visited Vienna several times with his own orchestra; Károly Boka (1808–1860), whose violin playing was praised, as in the anecdote included in Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 124.

<sup>80</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 127, n. 168.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 128, n. 169.



*Liszt's continuing relationships with cimbalom players, builders, and pedagogues*

Before addressing Liszt's relationships with people associated with the cimbalom in his later years, it is necessary to discuss the development of the cimbalom over the course of the nineteenth century in relation to its earlier development. After Hebenstreit's death in 1750, the reputation of the pantalon was overshadowed by that of the hammered dulcimer, in part because the pantalon demanded expensive maintenance and posed technical difficulties. Yet the hammered dulcimer known as the cimbalom continued to transform. The transformation of the instrument was reliant on the wide appeal of Gypsy-band performances; as emphasized earlier, it was inextricably related to the evocations of the instrument as adapted into the Western art-music tradition, as represented in *style-hongrois* compositions.

Over the course of the nineteenth century the cimbalom was transformed from a small and portable instrument into a larger concert instrument, extending the range and varying its appearance. In 1865 the renowned Hungarian author Mór Jókai denoted the cimbalom the "Hungarian piano," suggesting that the expanded capabilities of the cimbalom were almost the equivalent of the piano.<sup>82</sup> The "modern" cimbalom, however, had to wait until 1874, when V. József Schunda in Budapest made a concert version of the instrument. It featured a cast-iron interior frame; chromatic tuning; a weighted damper pedal that could mute vibrating strings with ease; and an extended range of slightly over four octaves.<sup>83</sup> This expansion replaced the old features of the small

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<sup>82</sup> György Kroó, *Aladár Rácz* (Budapest: Zenmukiadó, 1979), 170, as mentioned in Astaire, "Searching," 65, but he provides an incorrect translation in saying "by the 1830s," when the date is in fact 1865. My thanks to Professor Lynn Hooker for the correction.

<sup>83</sup> Kettlewell, "Dulcimer," *Grove*; Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, 115; Sárosi, "Gypsy Musicians," 23–24; Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 160, n. 12. Bellman, "Lexicon," 227, points out

portable cimbalom as practiced by Gypsy musicians during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century; their instrument had a wood-braced frame, was not chromatic, and was limited to a range of between two and a half and three octaves with no bass strings.<sup>84</sup> One of Schunda's achievements was to standardize the system of bridge placement and pitch layout. Before he established the system, there existed various configurations of pitch layout in the instruments built during the eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century.<sup>85</sup> This variation makes it difficult to assess precisely what model Liszt would have heard and experienced. Although Schunda's concert cimbalom is more elaborate than that used by the most renowned Gypsy-band musicians, and although it was invented later than Liszt's Rhapsodies, it can still provide insight into the peculiar system of pitch layout inherent in the cimbalom. Figure 8.4 illustrates the most usual form of the pitch layout of the concert cimbalom, for which Liszt, Bartók, and Stravinsky probably composed.<sup>86</sup>

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that the pedal fitted to the cimbalom by the mid- to late nineteenth century was, nevertheless, a "crude device." The range of the concert cimbalom is conceived of as D–e", but Grimes, "Evolution," 4–5, corrects the statement: in practice the range "can span from A2–F6 through C2–A6, with the latter being the most common range found for the instrument."

<sup>84</sup> Leach, "The Cimbalom," 134, 137.

<sup>85</sup> Gifford, *The Hammered Dulcimer*, "Appendix I: Tunings," 393–408, provides various types of tuning systems and pitch layouts.

<sup>86</sup> Leach, "The Cimbalom," 137.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 135; at 137, Leach points out that the tuning of the cimbalom is highly challenging. The primary reason is that the scale is set on the courses that produce two notes from one course of strings across the bridge. Following the system of Figure 8.4, the tuning begins with a1 on Course 17. The same course yields d1, a fifth lower, across the bridge. Next we tune a on the lower octave on Course 14, checking it with the previous notes a1 and d1. Then we tune e1 on Course 15, which sounds up a fifth. The same course, on the left side of bridge, gives b1; then we tune the note an octave lower on Course 10. The tuning continues to operate in a similar sequence of f#1/c#2 on Course 11, c#1 on Course 8, g#1/d2 on Course 9, g on Course 18, c1/g1 on Course 19, f1/c2 on Course 13, bb on Course 12, bb1/e2 on Course 7, eb1 on Course 6, and ab on Course 16. Once all the notes in the middle register have been tuned, the notes of the upper register operate in octave-tuning, checking them against notes an octave below in the middle register.

neighboring strings. For some strings, the bridge is very close to one or the other side of the instrument, so that virtually the whole length of the string is sounded. At the bottom of the instrument, for the lowest notes, the strings alternate going over a bridge on the left (for low D, F, G, A, and so on) or on the right (for E, F#, G#, and so on). In the middle of the instrument, the bridge on the left is replaced by a bridge about two-fifths of the way in from the left. Strings that go over this bridge can be struck on either side of the bridge; the left portion of the string will sound a note a fifth higher than the right portion (so, for instance, the lowest and longest such string sounds G on the left but C on the right). At the top of the instrument, some strings go over two bridges (or in some cases over two and under one), dividing them into still smaller portions in order to sound higher notes. As a result of this layout, notes that are next to each other in the scale are often far removed from each other from the player's perspective, creating challenges (and opportunities) that are unique to the cimbalom and other hammered dulcimers.

It is noteworthy that the unusual pattern of pitch layout is not simply one of the physical characteristics of the instrument, but also generates technical difficulties. Moreover, the peculiar pitch layout elicits distinctive types of tactile movements in execution, which in turn create additional visual effects. For example, if the player renders a trill on the pitches G–Ab in the middle register, he would not strike his mallets on the two adjacent notes we would expect of a standard trill, but on two notes placed apart from each other—one in the lower left side of the middle register and the other in the upper right side. The player therefore has to move frequently in performance, adding technical demands and creating an additional performance spectacle.

In an attempt to approximate the cimbalom technique on the piano, the peculiar layout of pitches on the instrument creates a problem for a composer in determining which pitch to assign to which hand and which staff on his score. In his pianistic renderings of the instrument, Liszt acknowledged this problem: the cimbalom lacks the linearity of pitch layout found on the piano. He provided his own solutions by deploying a particular notational device and layout as well as a certain technique intended for his two hands as a way to capture this intrinsic characteristic of the instrument, as the musical analyses in the following section will reveal.

Amidst the continual development of the cimbalom, Liszt's longstanding relationship with Gypsy cimbalom virtuosos confirms his constant and continuous interest in the cimbalom. Liszt had been acquainted for years with the cimbalom virtuoso Pál Pintér and his brothers József and Zsiga from 1873 on.<sup>88</sup> Liszt heard the performance of Pintér when Liszt was welcomed into the Gypsy band of Pál Rácz in November 1873 in Budapest at a social evening to celebrate the fiftieth jubilee of Liszt's concert debut.<sup>89</sup> In the same event, according to Legány's account, Liszt walked over to the Gypsy orchestra, focusing his interest not on the leader, the violinist, but on the cimbalom player, Pintér, who came to the forefront in the orchestra.<sup>90</sup> When Pintér demonstrated Schunda's concert cimbalom in 1874 at the World's Fair in Paris, Liszt also participated

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<sup>88</sup> Legány, *Liszt in Hungary, 1869–1873*, 204–5, 257. Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 81, n. 129.

<sup>89</sup> Legány, *Liszt in Hungary, 1869–1873*, 205, 257; at 153, Legány also cites an occasion when Liszt hired Gypsy musicians to play for a dinner he hosted in Budapest in 1872.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 205.

in the event and engaged with the cimbalom virtuoso's playing.<sup>91</sup> Moreover, he became one of the admirers of Schunda's concert cimbalom.<sup>92</sup>

Liszt's admiration for Schunda's instrument is evident in his letter to Géza Allaga, Schunda's collaborator:

You achieved with the cimbalom the same high merit as Erard did with the harp. Both of you retrieved ancient instruments from their withering decay and brought them to the level of orchestral quality. The Hungarian nation and all of its composers and artists there within, will always be grateful to you for your contributions. Allaga, I congratulate you with highest regards, on behalf of Hungarian musical society.<sup>93</sup>

It is notable that Liszt compared Schunda's cimbalom to the Erard's pedal harp with respect to the "orchestral quality" elicited from both instruments. Liszt favored the Erard more than any other piano, because it has its own multifaceted and delicate timbres.<sup>94</sup> As he had paid attention to the timbres and sonorities of his instrument, it is natural to see his fascination with Schunda's invention, which elevated the existing instrument to a more sophisticated level. Behind his admiration for Schunda's instrument lies his deep and continuous interest in sonorities, as he had experimented with his own piano to approximate intricate orchestral sounds in his early orchestral arrangements and as he continued to search for a new resource through his renderings of the cimbalom in his Rhapsodies.

In addition, Liszt sought to experiment with cimbalom techniques that he learned through method books by the cimbalom pedagogue Allaga, probably including the book

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<sup>91</sup> Grimes, "Evolution," 29.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Cited in Grimes, "Evolution," 29; Mária Eckhardt, *The Inheritance of Franz Liszt* (Budapest: Academy of Music, 1959); the source is not clear.

<sup>94</sup> Alfred Kanwischer describes the Erard piano: "Each octave of the Erard has its own peculiar tonal qualities," in contrast to modern grands with their unified timbre among all the octaves. Kanwischer, "Beethoven's Erard Piani," 39, n. 22, in Alfred J. Hipkins, *A Description and History of the Pianoforte*, 3rd ed. (London, 1929; reprint, Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1975), 39.

*Cimbalom iskola* [Cimbalom school] (1889) by Allaga, edited by Schunda (henceforth referred to as Allaga's method book).<sup>95</sup> Although this book was written in the 1890s, about three decades later than Liszt's Rhapsodies, it still can provide useful examples to explore several essential and distinctive techniques of the cimbalom on which Liszt would have drawn. The following discussions will therefore investigate several fundamental and distinctive types of cimbalom technique as delineated in Allaga's method book, to help set the stage for Liszt's approximation of those techniques in his pianistic terms. While taking material primarily from Allaga's method book, specific examples will also be drawn from contemporary articles about the cimbalom, Gustav Pressel's "Die Musik der Ungarn" from *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1852), as well as Schubert's *Divertissement* as representative of the *style hongrois* tradition.<sup>96</sup>

### **Cimbalom Techniques**

The examples from Allaga's method books written during the 1880s–1900s, including *Cimbalom iskola*, represent the first and foremost systematic approach to the technique of the cimbalom. Despite the continuing technical advances in the instrument, Allaga's books provide a model for subsequent methods published throughout twentieth century.<sup>97</sup>

Allaga's method book is thus more associated with the so-called modern concert

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<sup>95</sup> Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*. Grimes, "The Evolution," 34–35, claims Liszt's engagement with Allaga's method book based on the author's interview with Herencsár, 1 August 2000. But it is not certain if Grimes is specifically referring to the book by Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*. Allaga's method book was considered the most representative of technical study for the instrument in the 1880s. One of Allaga's contributions to the concert cimbalom was the establishment of the first published methodology for the performance technique in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Leach, "The Cimbalom," 139–40.

<sup>96</sup> Pressel, "Die Musik der Ungarn," no. 19, 215–16.

<sup>97</sup> The general tendency in twentieth-century method books for the cimbalom is to rely almost exclusively on Allaga's approach. For further examples of later method books, see Tarjáni Tóth Ida and Falka József, *Cimbalomiskola: Cymbolschule*, vols. 2 (Budapest: Editio Musica, 1957).

cimbalom since Schunda's invention of it in 1874 than with the instrument Liszt would have envisioned for his Rhapsodies, though Liszt became acquainted with the book in his later years. Although there were instrumental advances and corresponding technical developments between Liszt's Rhapsodies of the 1850s–1860s and Allaga's method book of the 1890s, the book still can be useful in Liszt studies. It is likely that Gypsy cimbalom players in the mid-nineteenth century used many of the techniques delineated in the method book. Accordingly, the following examples introduce several fundamental and distinctive types of cimbalom technique included in Allaga's method book to help provide insight into what types of techniques the cimbalom player of Liszt's time might have deployed.

Trills and tremolos are two of the fundamental techniques of the cimbalom.

Examples 8.2a and 8.2b–c illustrate trills and tremolos, respectively; Examples 8.2b and 8.2c differ from each other, as the former shows tremolos on one note and the latter on two notes.

Example 8.2a. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 11, cimbalom trills



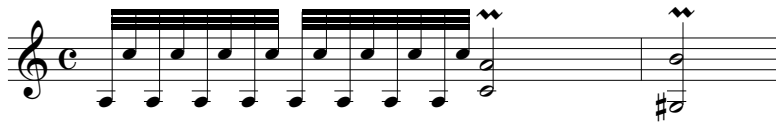
Example 8.2b. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 40; cimbalom tremolos on one note<sup>98</sup>



<sup>98</sup> See also the brief explanation of tremolos, Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 12.



Example 8.2c. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 40; cimbalom tremolos on two notes



Example 8.2a at first sight displays ostensibly conventional trills on two chromatically adjacent notes, which are ubiquitous for all instruments. Such trills become more characteristic when they are performed on the cimbalom, however, not only because the instrument by itself elicits delicate timbres but also because it involves an unusual physical movement in execution. As discussed earlier, the instrument features a peculiar layout of pitches across the soundboard. The two notes G–Ab in Example 8.2a are not placed side by side but apart from each other: G in the lower middle of the left side and Ab in the upper middle of the right side. The result of the performance of the trills is thus to create a distinctive physical and visual effect in the movement of the two mallets striking the strings, while simultaneously the conventional trill sound is still heard. In a similar manner, the performance of tremolos on two notes, as in Example 8.2c, makes additional demands in the cimbalom player’s choreography, which in turn elicit a characteristic visual effect. The choreography becomes more visually stunning when a succession of trills and tremolos unfolds.

As illustrated in Example 8.2b, tremolos occurring on one note rather than two are characteristic of cimbalom playing. The tremolos on one note are executed by allowing repeated immediate rebounding of the hammer in one hand (here it is the left hand, designated as number 1 in the score), whereas tremolos or trills on two notes, as in Examples 8.2a and 8.2c, involve blows alternating between the hands but on different

strings. The tremolos in Example 8.2b are produced by allowing the hammers to bounce repeatedly after each strike. The hammer is held loosely in the hand, helping it to bounce rapidly off the strings and to strike the string again and again, virtually without effort. The player can change the pressure to keep up the rebounding, making it feasible to execute the twelve rapid rebounds and rearticulations indicated in Example 8.2b.

Whereas Examples 8.2a–c illustrate different types and effects of tremolos, it is significant that the techniques requiring the rebounding of the hammer as in Example 8.2b and the wide-gap tremolos between two notes as in Example 8.2c are not true of such tremolos on the piano or violin but quintessentially of the cimbalom, because all the strings are essentially equal in difficulty and consequently peculiar physical gestures are involved in the execution. In addition, as for the tremolos in Examples 8.2b–c, it is intriguing to see a particular marking of tremolos throughout the method book. The conventional sign of the mordent that is used for short ornaments comes to denote “tremolos” for the cimbalom. In the case of the tremolos on one note, as in Example 8.2b, the marking asks the player to continue to repeat the single note instead of a brief two-note ornament as might normally be expected.

The cimbalom tremolos are copious and conspicuous in Gypsy-band performance and published repertoire, particularly in slow tempi. As discussed earlier, almost every “Hungarian-style” composition begins in a slow tempo. A famous example of the *Rákóczi* lament, as illustrated in Example 8.3, published first by Gábor Mátray (1826), displays a continuous layer of cimbalom tremolos embedded into an entire texture. The effect elicited from the technique in turn distinctively evokes Hungarian-Gypsy style with its characteristically shimmering layer of sound.

Example 8.3. *Rákóczi* lament as published by Gábor Mátray (1826)<sup>99</sup>



Though trills and tremolos are common techniques for many instruments in classical European tradition, they are essential aspects of cimbalom playing. The trills and tremolos compensate for the fast decay of tones on the instrument by sustaining the sound, maintaining interest in long-held notes, and providing a resonant background. More importantly, the trills and tremolos that distinguish the sound of the Hungarian Gypsy band from Western European instruments create an unusual layer of sounds and effects on physical, visual, and acoustic levels. The tremolos, in particular, frequently unfold in an extensive range in a slow tempo, creating an unbroken layer of distinctive shimmering sound. This particular technique became a major inspiration for classical composers in their adaptations, as will be discussed with regard to the renderings of Schubert and Liszt's further developments.

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<sup>99</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 104; Szabolcsi, *Concise History of Hungarian Music*, 159–61. The *Rákóczi* tune, one of the earliest notated melodies from the Hungarian-Gypsy repertoire, is associated with the recruiting music used in the *Kuruc* movement during the period *ca.* 1680–1710 when the Hungarians fought against Hapsburg rule, culminating in the war of independence led by Ferenc Rákóczy (1703–11). The main musical stylistic feature of the *Rákóczi* tune is alternation between the dominant and upper tonic, the *kuruc* fourth, as the melody of Example 8.3, m. 1, delineates.

Whereas trills and tremolos explore a resonant sound on the cimbalom, another important technique, illustrated in Example 8.4, emphasizes the percussive sound of the instrument.

Example 8.4. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 34



The numbers 1 and 2 on the score indicate the left and right hand of the cimbalom player, respectively, although these numbers suggest the right and left hand in an opposite way if the music is rendered in a piano score. The right hand indicated by the number 2 plays a melody by moving across the soundboard, as in the exercise drawn from the section “Varied Tones” (“Veränderte Töne”) from the method book. The left hand shown by the number 1, on the other hand, consistently repeats a single note by hammering on one spot, requiring the distinctive technique of a motion that rebounds off the string so it can immediately strike it again. In each pair of eighth notes, the first represents a strike, the second its immediate rearticulation after a rebound. This hammering on one spot with one hand is comparable to the tremolos on one note, as observed above (Example 8.2b). Both cases require a more immediate rebound and thus more delicate control of the hammer.

Example 8.4 demonstrates a pedagogical and practical purpose of the technique on a simple level as well as an aesthetic reason behind the technique on a deeper level. The example at first sight illustrates essentially the separation of the two hands involved in the use of two mallets. Because of the unusual pitch layout of the cimbalom, one hand

staying on a single note makes the performance far easier than making both hands move simultaneously. For educational purposes, the excerpt enables the cimbalom player to hone his skills of not only maintaining the two independent lines and capturing the simultaneous presentation of the two different layers of textures, techniques, and articulations but also creating a texture like that of a tune over pulsing chords. The practical and educational purposes all converge into the aesthetic qualities of the technique, which create a distinctive coalescence of sounds. The repeated note of Example 8.4 creates a percussive effect by hammering rhythmically in a faster tempo, sustaining the intensity and also building up excitement. The layer of repeated notes in one hand, however, becomes more distinctive when combined with another layer of different sound in the other hand, which plays melodic material. The texture is also reminiscent of *bariolage* on the violin. The result of the performance is to present the two simultaneous layers of textures and figurations, each pronouncing its own character and pitted against each other, at the same time creating a unique combination of sounds.

All of the techniques from Allaga's method book discussed above help enrich our understanding of contemporary descriptions of cimbalom playing from Gustav Pressel's article "Die Musik der Ungarn" in *Neue Zeitschrift für Musik* (1852).<sup>100</sup> Pressel provides a brief description of the role of the cimbalom in the slow section (*lassú*), in which long fermatas are inserted, as illustrated in Example 8.5. While the violins sustain the notes, the cimbalom player has the task of filling out those fermatas through three main techniques and effects: vibrating sounds, rapidly repeated hammering of the same notes,

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<sup>100</sup> Pressel, "Die Musik der Ungarn," no. 19, 215–16.

or harmonic figuration as rendered in arpeggiation between the two pauses in the example.<sup>101</sup>

Example 8.5. Pressel, “Die Musik der Ungarn,” cimbalom playing during fermatas<sup>102</sup>



The hammering sound evokes the cimbalom player’s hitting on one string, as observed in tremolos or repeated articulation on one note from Allaga’s book (Examples 8.2b and 8.4). Both cases demand that the player take advantage of rebounding of the hammer to create a lighter or more percussive sound. The vibrating sound, on the other hand, requires a different type of technique from that of the hammering sound. The spectrum of technique and effect is wide: the player can use not only simple trills, as observed in Example 8.2a from Allaga’s book, but also wide-gap tremolos on two notes that create a shimmering sound and a characteristic choreography of performance, as in Example 8.2c from Allaga’s book and as extensively found in Example 8.3 of the *Rákóczi* lament. The mordent sign that follows the second fermata in Example 8.5 recalls that used specifically for the cimbalom tremolos throughout Allaga’s book, suggesting that the cimbalom player extends the shimmering sound (and his role) beyond the pause.

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<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 215.

The cimbalom player also provides the widely unfolding, resonant arpeggiations between the pauses. Pressel claims that the cimbalom player is capable of rendering such arpeggiation, because the instrument—the “hammered dulcimer” in Pressel’s term—includes over three octaves with which to perform harmonic figurations and tremolos at a fast tempo.<sup>103</sup> Example 8.5 thus demonstrates that the sustained notes become precisely the places where the cimbalom player comes to the forefront by deploying his distinctive sounds and effects of hammering, vibrating, or shimmering.

Pressel also discusses the role of the cimbalom as part of the Hungarian Gypsy art of ornamentation. He describes two aspects of the creative process, the creation of a tune and the creation of an accompaniment. For the former, he emphasizes the use of ornaments, including mordents and runs, as a necessary elaboration in rendering Hungarian tunes, whereas similar ornaments used for melodies in Western art music could become tasteless.<sup>104</sup> For the latter, he likens Gypsy musicians’ “instrumental garb” for their folk tunes to the colorful and varied “Hungarian national garb,” stressing that without such ornamental accompaniment the Hungarian songs would detract from their national type.<sup>105</sup> What he takes into account, in particular, is the instrumental embellishment as rendered on the piano, in which the tone easily fades away; yet a full use of such instrumental ornaments would help to sustain the tone and thus offer a vivid idea of Gypsy playing.<sup>106</sup> Illustrating the two examples from Pressel’s article, Example 8.6a is an existing tune in a slow-tempo section (“Lassu”) with the expressive marking of

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 215.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 216.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

“lamenting” (“Klagend”), whereas Example 8.6b illustrates how the tune would be rendered in an instrumental embellishment.

Example 8.6a. Existing tune (“Tree and root are torn, I and dear / my love are separated!”)

**Lassu (= Adagio.) Klagend.**

**Gesang.**

Baum und Wur-zel sind zer-ri-sen,  
u. f. to.  
Ich und Lieb-chen sind ge-trennt!

Example 8.6b. “Instrumental embellishment” of the tune

**Lassu.**

**Cymbal's**

**ritard. & tempo. Tremolo Solo**

**(Cymbal.)**

**(Cymbal.)**

u. f. to.

Although Pressel discusses this embellished version in the broader context of Hungarian Gypsy-style ornamentation, the important issue for our current discussion is



how the role of the cimbalom player is proactive in the process of instrumental embellishment through his distinctive techniques and effects. Explicitly designated as “Cymbal’s Tremolo Solo” in Example 8.6b, the tremolos on one note initiated by brief turning figuration suggest one of the idiomatic techniques of the cimbalom, because it is easy to leave one hammer playing on a string while the other hammer changes strings. In addition, the arpeggios under the designation “(Cymbal.)” immediately recall those intended to create resonating, harmonic sound in between pauses, as in Example 8.5 above.

Aside from such overt designations assigned specifically to the cimbalom player in Example 8.6b, the player could engage in rendering the entire passage, not necessarily confining his role to the sustained notes or notes in fermatas. He could join in with the playing of the solo instruments such as violin or clarinet, or he could render the whole passage by himself. The cimbalom’s role is thus not confined to filling-out or extension of the fermatas, but also plays independently on an equal footing with the violinist.

The same line of reasoning of the cimbalom ornaments and improvisation also appears in Allaga’s method book. Example 8.7 illustrates how the improvising cimbalom player would have rendered an existing tune with various types of ornaments in a slow rhapsodic-style section or piece.

Example 8.7. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 73



The excerpt above is drawn from the section “Folksongs” of the method book. The large-sized notes, presumably, already represent a certain degree of paraphrase of an existing tune. The profuse ornaments further elaborate the tune, shifting the emphasis from the original toward the art of ornamentation.<sup>107</sup>

The example above provides insight into some general tendencies in the use of ornaments. Throughout the passage it is notable that the ornaments almost always move in an ascending direction, which is also customary for cimbalom playing throughout the method book. The broken-chord arpeggiation often develops into a melodic turn typical of cimbalom gestures. The arpeggiation draws our attention to its distinctive effect and role; it requires a rapid hand-over-hand motion, which in turn helps not only to create a unique tactile and visual effect but also to suspend the tempo. The arpeggios make their appearance momentous from the outset with an emphatic *forte*. They lend the impression of being treated as more important than the note they finally reach, as Judit Frigyesi

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<sup>107</sup> In the last section of this chapter, I will further discuss the art of ornamentation and the improvisatory practice in Hungarian Gypsy-band music in Liszt’s evocation of the improvising cimbalom player.

claims that the Gypsy musicians did not consider their embellishing simply as

“ornaments around a note but as a statement in its own right.”<sup>108</sup>

Examples 8.6b and 8.7, from Pressel’s article and Allaga’s method book, respectively, demonstrate how the existing tune becomes exuberant through the cimbalom player’s use of profuse ornaments in a slow passage. These examples essentially help to convey the image of the improvising cimbalom player in a rhapsodic style. As we will observe in the next chapter, the unmistakable correspondence between the rhapsodic passage as found in Example 8.7 and one of Liszt’s renderings will help to illuminate his deep understanding of cimbalom improvisation and his intentional indebtedness to the instrument’s characteristic practice and style.

In conclusion, the excerpts from Allaga’s method book and Pressel’s article provide useful examples to explore several essential techniques of the cimbalom in a systematic manner; this in turn will help us to understand the cimbalom techniques and effects that Liszt attempted to approximate, emulate, and recreate in his piano scores. Trills and tremolos are essential for any type of instrument but they become distinctive on the cimbalom because its unique pitch layout, choreography, and delicate timbres are all intertwined to create unusual visual, physical, and aural effects (Examples 8.2a–c). The technique of hammering on a single note (Examples 8.2b and 8.4) requires a particular type of motion of immediate rebounding. Although tremolos are often used to create a resonant and shimmering sound (as extensively incorporated into Example 8.3), the hammering usually appears in a rapid tempo to bring out a percussive effect and build up

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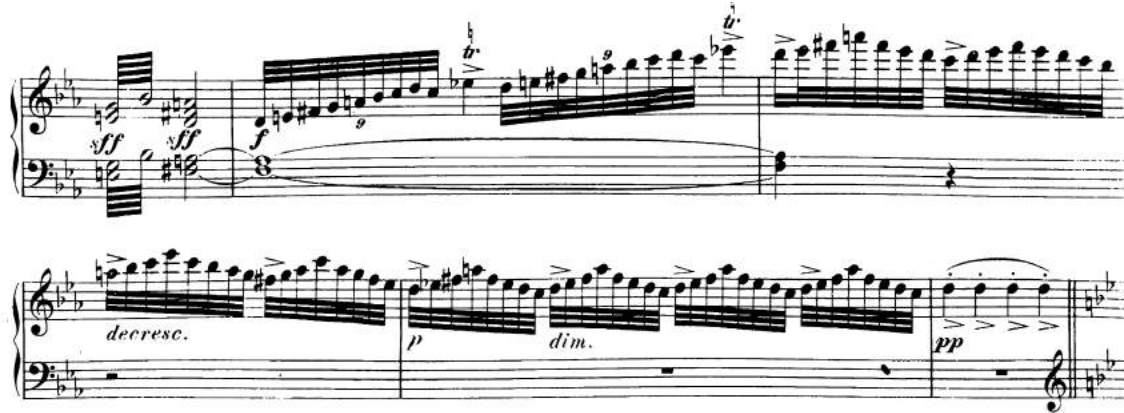
<sup>108</sup> Judit Frigyesi, *Béla Bartók and Turn-of-the Century Budapest* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 246. This concept of ornamentation will be further discussed later in the next chapter on Liszt’s response to cimbalom improvisation.

excitement. When the rhythmic hammering is combined with other melodic material, which requires the independent movement and role of each of the hammers, it generates a unique combination of sounds and textures (Example 8.4). The cimbalom player also explores a variety of ornaments to render a plain pre-existent tune in a slow tempo, lending the passage an improvisatory quality (Examples 8.6b and 8.7); the extensive arpeggiation as part of the embellishment, in particular, requires the player to use a rapid hand-over-hand motion, once again calling attention to the unique tactile and visual effect of the instrument.

*Cimbalom techniques as adapted into the style-hongrois tradition*

If the Allaga method book and Pressel's article of 1852 provide insight into the essential and distinctive techniques of the cimbalom, such techniques had already been absorbed and adapted into compositions by leading classical composers prior to Liszt, in keeping with the tradition of *style hongrois* mentioned earlier. Schubert's *Divertissement* (1824), for instance, provides various examples of pianistic renderings of a wide spectrum of the cimbalom sounds and techniques. The entire passage shown as Example 8.8 encapsulates the multi-faceted aspects of the cimbalom sounds and techniques.

Example 8.8. Schubert, *Divertissement à la hongroise*, Op. 54, I, mm. 134–39<sup>109</sup>



The passage begins with shimmering cimbalom tremolos, followed by rhapsodic scales and up-and-down flurries, concluding with declamatory repeated notes. When we observe the free and rhapsodic passage of Example 8.8 in detail, the repeating pattern of the up-and-down melodic contour would have been particularly suitable for cimbalom performance.<sup>110</sup> Cimbalom playing is reliant on the same physical pattern repeated in different places on the instrument. The repeating pattern thus serves as a distinctive marker for the cimbalom evocation that is distinguished from any similar type of rhapsodic or cadenza-like passages prevalent in virtuosic piano pieces. (This particular marker will be further developed in relation to Liszt's Rhapsodies in Chapter 9.)

As discussed earlier, Schubert's *Divertissement*, which had great influence on Liszt, is viewed as a pinnacle of the *style-hongrois* tradition, as the composer uses the Hungarian Gypsy elements not merely as exotic markers but as essential constituents of the composition by incorporating the quintessential features such as motivic material and

<sup>109</sup> This example has been used in Pethő, "*Style hongrois*," 264 and Astaire, "Searching," 75.

<sup>110</sup> Noticed in Astaire, "Searching," 75.

intonation into a musical process at a profound level.<sup>111</sup> Yet Schubert placed his evocations of the cimbalom in inconspicuous parts of the composition and also on a surface level by confining them to mostly to conventional stylistic figurations such as tremolos and filigree as well as to a subsidiary role that supports the melody, standing for the imaginary first violin. The musical analyses in Chapter 9 will demonstrate how Liszt continued his predecessors' practices of the references to the Gypsy cimbalom player, while expanding them to create his individual idioms in a novel way. If Schubert provided a precedent for those renderings associated with the tradition of the *style hongrois*, Liszt continued his predecessors' practices of the references to the Gypsy cimbalom player, while expanding them to create his individual idioms in a novel way, as will be fleshed out in the following chapter of musical analyses.

## Conclusion

Liszt's continuous interest in and relationship with figures like Gypsy cimbalom virtuoso Pál Pintér, cimbalom manufacturer József Schunda, and pedagogue Géza Allaga must have had an impact on his compositions associated with Hungarian Gypsy music. In fact, Liszt included a part for the cimbalom in his *Ungarischer Sturmmarsch* in 1876, although until then he had not composed for the cimbalom in any of his orchestral scores.<sup>112</sup> Although Liszt's direct relationship with the cimbalom player and his incorporation of the actual instrument occurred much later than the composition of his Rhapsodies (from

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<sup>111</sup> Pethő, "Style hongrois."

<sup>112</sup> Kaptain, "Hungarian Cimbalom," 10, claims that Liszt was probably the first major concert composer who used the cimbalom, in his 1876 orchestral composition.

1846), his experiments with the instrument had already developed through those Rhapsodies.<sup>113</sup>

Liszt's description of the cimbalom in his *Des bohémiens*, the techniques of the instrument in Allaga's method book and Pressel's article of 1852, and the *style-hongrois* adaptations all demonstrate the sonic possibilities of the cimbalom. As Liszt noted, what makes the cimbalom unique in the Gypsy band are its distinctive timbres and techniques. As discussed earlier in relation to Hebenstreit's pantalon, the substance of which the sticks are composed, and whether the strings are made of gut or metal, contributes to diverse timbres in conjunction with different registers. The variety of coverings also helps in exploring extensive capabilities of the instrument in a wide gamut of dynamic shadings.

It is not an easy task to characterize the peculiar timbre of the cimbalom. On the one hand it is transient due to the fast decay, generating salient percussive and metallic sounds; and on the other hand, it produces a blending of sounds because of the lack of damper mechanism when one group of sounds merges into another.<sup>114</sup> As mentioned earlier, the absence of dampers demands that the player utilizes motion and position to manage the resonating sounds during his performance. When the player sweeps wide-range arpeggios, in particular, it produces sophisticated layers of timbres, yet at the same

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<sup>113</sup> Even the cimbalom part in *Ungarischer Strummarsch* is considerably less sophisticated than that in the orchestrated Rhapsody. Liszt's later orchestrated version of his Rhapsodies (1853–54) may lead presumptions about his thoughts on the cimbalom part in between his piano and orchestrated version. Yet Liszt did not want to pursue orchestration in 1854 and asked his assistant to stop working on it. Humphrey Searle, *The Music of Liszt* (New York: Dover, 1966), 69. Only the first six Rhapsodies are orchestrated, yet the significant evocations of the cimbalom are present more in the later Rhapsodies, especially Nos. 8, 10, and 11.

<sup>114</sup> János Pap, "The Acoustical Characteristics of the Concert Cimbalom," *Systematische Musikwissenschaft* 6 (1998): 189–206; at 191–94, Pap experiments with the sound properties of the concert cimbalom in relation to its construction, including the sound decay and vibration.

time it necessitates a great deal of physical choreography to damp the strings with control of his hand and position.

The cimbalom player also displays various figurations that involve several types of techniques. He performs widely-spaced arpeggios or tremolos as a resonant harmonic background, in which the turning figuration typical of the cimbalom-playing often outlines the harmonic arpeggios. He also exhibits repeating notes by hammering on a single pitch but in different ways: as a melodic line in a declamatory fashion in a slow tempo, as a rapid movement for brilliant passagework, or as a percussive sound for an extraordinary display in a fast tempo. It is thus a natural outcome that throughout his Rhapsodies Liszt regarded the cimbalom as “a harmonic instrument, a declamatory instrument, or an instrument of virtuoso display in *friss* [the fast section].”<sup>115</sup>

The following chapter provides musical examples that illustrate Liszt’s emphasis on the texture, timbre, and technique unique to the cimbalom in his various pianistic renderings of the instrument in his Rhapsodies.

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<sup>115</sup> Bellman, “Lexicon,” 229.



## Chapter 9

### Liszt's Creative Renderings of the Cimbalom

Throughout his Rhapsodies, Liszt emulates the distinctive sound and effect of the cimbalom, convincingly rendering the multifaceted aspects of cimbalom playing in his pianistic terms. The following musical analyses demonstrate Liszt's creative renderings of the cimbalom by isolating them into seven salient features associated with the instrument's timbres and techniques:

- (1) Cimbalom shimmering and tremolos
- (2) Cimbalom trills and their visual effect
- (3) Cimbalom flourishes and their distinctive contour
- (4) Cimbalom repetition and single-note hammering
- (5) Cimbalom repetition in fast sections and its percussive effect
- (6) Cimbalom player and interaction with the violinist
- (7) Cimbalom improvisation and *hallgató* style

All of the cimbalom renderings illustrate how Liszt successfully captures the techniques and effects of the instrument in his creative pianistic terms, how he meticulously expresses each technique and effect with a particular type of notation, and how he integrates the instrument's unique sounds with other instruments of the ensemble to evoke the image of actual Gypsy-band performance. The result is a skillful coalescence of his sensitive attention to the integrity of the instrument and his inventive pianistic solutions.

## (1) Cimbalom Shimmering and Tremolos

Tremolos are one of the typical idiomatic and stylized figurations to evoke the cimbalom when it is transferred to a piano arrangement, as had appeared in the excerpt from Schubert's *Divertissement* (Chapter 8) and also in the published repertoire of Gypsy-band music from the 1780s.<sup>1</sup> The earlier examples generally reduced the cimbalom figuration to a perfunctory level by confining its figuration to simply reiterated patterns of tremolos, appearing mostly in a short span, and relegating its role mostly to a subservient accompaniment in the left hand. In contrast, Liszt further developed the tremolos in his own renderings throughout; they appear far more extensively, prominently, and diversely, with his meticulous attention to the distinctive timbres and techniques native to cimbalom playing.

The shimmering sound of the cimbalom is immediately recognizable by means of an explicit designation of “*quasi zimbalo(n)*” in the published score, as illustrated in the oft-used examples below, Examples 9.1 and 9.2 of Rhapsodies Nos. 10 and 11, respectively.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an example of the latter, see Papp, “Die Quellen der ‘Verbunkos-Musik,’” 100, item 49, no. 3; also see Schubert, *Divertissement à la hongroise*, Allegretto, mm. 324–33 and his *Fantasie*, mm. 1–9.

<sup>2</sup> The examples from Rhapsodies Nos. 10 and 11 are frequently invoked in Hungarian music scholarship, including Bellman, “Lexicon,” 227–29 for No. 11. As for the designation, it is also present in the first editions of Nos. 10 and 11, published by B. Schott's Söhne in Mainz in 1853 and Schlesinger in Berlin in 1853, respectively, suggesting that it was the composer's own. The editions are available from the Ruth Dana Collection of Liszt Editions, Vol. 6 in the Juilliard School Library, New York.

Example 9.1. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 10, cimbalom shimmering

*a capriccio*

82 *pp*\*) quasi zimbalo

84 *p*

86 *pp*

88 *pp*

90 *pp*

92 *dim.*

Example 9.2. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 11, opening

The musical score for Liszt's Rhapsody No. 11, opening, is presented in a single system. The tempo is marked "Lento a capriccio". The piano part begins with a tremolo in the right hand, marked "p quasi simbalon una corda". The score includes various dynamic markings such as "pp", "p", "dolciss.", "smorz.", "f", and "ppp". It also includes performance instructions like "energico" and "marcato". The score is divided into measures with fingerings and articulations indicated.

Aside from the explicit cimbalom designation, one may ask what makes the prominent tremolos cimbalom-like, not just pianistic. How would a cimbalom player perform such passages? One way to explicate this is to focus on Liszt's notation. In Example 9.1, Liszt's delineation of the tremolo passages in the piano score illustrates how he saw the

potential of the movement of the two hands on the keyboard as analogous to the movement of the two mallets on the cimbalom. The tremolos are divided between the two hands in alternation, written with a different direction of the stem for each hand, as if the hands are functioning like a pair of mallets on the cimbalom. Furthermore, the published score provided a specific fingering for the left hand of the tremolos in a series of 3–2 (mm. 82–83) and then 3–1–2 (m. 84).<sup>3</sup> The particular type of two-hand alternation and fingering are probably less associated with Liszt’s attempt to facilitate a better pianistic execution with ease than his close attention to approximating the delicate movement of the instrument’s sticks that strike against the strings. In Example 9.2, by recalling the cimbalom playing of tremolos from Allaga’s book, particularly those on two notes that are distant from each other on the soundboard (see Example 8.2c), the succession of widely-spaced tremolos that Liszt deploys becomes less pianistic than cimbalom-like.<sup>4</sup>

Several elements shared in Examples 9.1 and 9.2 also demonstrate how Liszt heightens both the visual and the aural prominence of the cimbalom tremolos. The elements include the soft dynamic, the detailed dynamic markings, the use of the damper pedal, and a free-rhythm passage under the specific designation “*a capriccio*” (No. 10) or “*Lento a capriccio*” (No. 11). The following discussions provide more detail.

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<sup>3</sup> The fingering appears in the first edition of 1853 from the Ruth Dana Collection of Liszt Editions, Vol. 6.

<sup>4</sup> In Example 9.2, it is intriguing to see the alternation between right and left hands playing the same notes—the tremolos in m. 1 is followed by the same notes arpeggiated in the left hand on the second beat. This requests twice in m. 1, then the order of the hands is reversed in mm. 2–3. Liszt presents literally the same notes in the left hand as those in the right hand, bringing up the question of the advantage of playing them on the piano. This rendering could also be an emulation of the movement of the cimbalom player’s two hands, probably one hand now with two hammers playing the tremolos followed by the other hand playing the arpeggiated chord.

Liszt heightens the evocative, shimmering cimbalom effect by exploring pianistic resources fully. He uses the damper pedal effectively to deepen the resonant cimbalom-like sonority and create the effect of blending the harmony that is intrinsic to the instrument. Liszt's pedal markings used in his Rhapsodies often tend to allow different harmonies to merge into each other, contributing to one of his stylistic innovations.<sup>5</sup> In this case, his aspiration to expand pianistic resources goes hand in hand with his attempts to approximate the delicately blending sounds of the cimbalom. At the same time Liszt is able to take advantage of the piano's damper mechanism to manage the continuance of sound and also to make the pianist's position control the mixed sounds without strenuous effort. In contrast, if we recall Hebenstreit's playing, he "made his leaps" playing on his instrument with no dampers in this period. In addition, in the case of Example 9.2 (No. 11), the use of the *una corda* may also help imitate the soft sound elicited from the cotton-wrapped mallet striking against the strings. Liszt's exploitation of the piano pedals explicitly accentuates and amplifies the aural impact of the cimbalom on the audience.

Liszt approaches the dynamic and expressive markings on a sophisticated level to render the colorful cimbalom sounds and textures. The dynamic fluctuations of the tremolos are articulated by the detailed *crescendos* and *decrescendos*, which evoke the cimbalom player's increase and decrease in intensity of his striking. The rendering of the cimbalom player's technique culminates in m. 88 of Example 9.1, when Liszt incorporates his meticulous designations of the dynamic level, while simultaneously expanding the cimbalom tremolos to an astonishing level by further widening the

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<sup>5</sup> *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, ed. Gárdonyi and Szelényi, VIII.

keyboard register. In Example 9.2, the *smorzando* (m. 4) requires the player both to slow down the tempo and to soften the tremolos until virtually no sound is heard, as if the cimbalom player is fading away the sound of his hammering almost to nothing. Moreover, the expressive markings such as *espressivo* and *dolcissimo* (mm. 5–6) emphasize the delicate nuances of the cimbalom as a melodic instrument when it unfolds its characteristic turning figurations, which are interspersed with the prominent tremolos throughout the section.

The temporal freedom creates a rhapsodic style that aptly portrays the improvising cimbalom soloist. The dynamic and expressive markings mentioned above already contributed to a *rubato* style of performance. The two examples share free note-values to lend the impression of an improvisatory style under the designation *a capriccio* (“at the whim of the performer”), which suggests a particular performance manner of temporal freedom. Example 9.1 further exhibits temporal flexibility and fluidity. Almost every passage of the cimbalom tremolos begins with long-held notes in rolled chords and concludes with a pause with *fermatas*; the exception is the passage in m. 85, which does the reverse. In contrast, the cimbalom tremolos in between the suspended moments increase their volume and intensity with a *crescendo*; moreover, it is likely that the tremolos require acceleration, as customary for cimbalom playing. We can recall Liszt’s description in his *Des bohémiens* of the cimbalom’s performance manner as “the acceleration or slackening of time, as also the degree of movement” (see Chapter 8). The temporal fluidity lends a fantasy-like character to the entire passage, as if the cimbalom player were exhibiting his prowess as an improviser. In Example 9.2, the fantasy-like

style is more enhanced by eschewing any definite sense of a bass, creating a floating nature of sound throughout.<sup>6</sup>

Examples 9.1 and 9.2 give a prominent role to the imagined cimbalom player by exhibiting constant tremolos across an extensive range. The cimbalom tremolos of Example 9.2, in particular, appear in the introduction of the composition. On a structural level, this is appropriate for the rhapsodic introductory section that often precedes a customary slow–fast sequence of Gypsy-band music. Moreover, it brings our attention to the improvising cimbalom technique from the outset. In both examples, Liszt therefore put the cimbalom effect at the forefront of the performance, almost exclusively focusing on the shimmering cimbalom and ultimately highlighting the image of the cimbalom solo.

As illustrated in Examples 9.1 and 9.2, therefore, the continuous tremolo figuration with shimmering sonority is intended to create an unbroken layer of cimbalom sound. The steady and sustained sound is further achieved on the piano by means of Liszt's full exploitation of pianistic resources and novel notational aids. Liszt's notation is not a simple matter of his experiment with or search for the new in a broad context of keyboard literature; in this case, it represents his assiduous efforts to turn the pianist into a cimbalom player in both the visual and aural dimension. Behind all the types of notational peculiarities lie his attempts to approximate the cimbalom virtuoso's skillful movements of his mallets—which entail his distinctive choreography across the

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<sup>6</sup> The implied A-minor harmony does not establish itself until a light touch on the dominant seventh and tonic of A major in m. 9, while it wanders from one area to another in a succession of different harmonic colors instead of a definite harmonic underpinning.



soundboard as illustrated in the rendering of the extensive, wide-space tremolos above—and the resulting delicately shimmering sounds.

What is significant in Liszt's rendering of cimbalom tremolos is his emphasis on the timbre and physicality of the instrument more than any concrete material such as a melodic or rhythmic content. He saw the sonorous potential of the cimbalom on his piano. The result is to better capture the improvising cimbalom player, who elicits a sophisticated, kaleidoscopic, yet wandering and restless quality of sound.

#### *Liszt's notation and the designation "a capriccio"*

The detailed look at Examples 9.1 and 9.2 above through the lens of cimbalom-playing has helped us to understand the underlying aesthetic of Liszt's unique approach to notation. As discussed above, he carefully deploys pedal markings and dynamic and expressive markings, as well as metrical and rhythmic freedom, fluidity, and flexibility, in an attempt to render the shimmering tremolos of the cimbalom. In many instances of his Rhapsodies, in fact, Liszt's attempts to capture Gypsy-band practices led him to diverge from the rigidity of notation but instead to deploy his own notational methods. In their critical notes on the Rhapsodies, Zoltán Gárdonyi and István Szelényi point out that Liszt's distinctive notation, which deviates from the norm, stems from his attempts "to capture graphically the methods of playing and the peculiar characteristics of popular Gypsy bands."<sup>7</sup>

Although Liszt deploys various notational devices in his Rhapsodies, on occasion he reserves a specific designation *a capriccio* for particular passages that are immediately

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<sup>7</sup> *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, ed. Gárdonyi and Szelényi, XI.

distinguishable from others in notation, texture, and character. Liszt's use of the marking immediately relates to the associations with the term *capriccio* in Western European art music, yet at the same time it becomes more significant in relation to his attempts to emulate several distinctive types of Gypsy-band styles, particular those for the cimbalom. We already observed the designation used for his rendering of the cimbalom tremolos in Example 9.1 and 9.2. The following discussion considers the term in the two different traditions, showing his historical awareness of the *capriccio* tradition on the one hand, his particular references to Gypsy-band idioms on the other hand, and ultimately his skillful assimilation of the two traditions.

The marking *a capriccio* is probably derived from the generic term *capriccio* ("whim" or "fancy" in Italian), but at the same time it is distinguishable from the latter; the marking *a capriccio* ("at the whim of the performer" or "following one's fancy") is associated with an interpretive indication in relation to a manner of performance that frequently involves temporal freedom and fluctuation. The term *capriccio* has a variety of meanings; even in the Romantic *capriccio*, there exists no single meaning.<sup>8</sup> However, it is generally associated with a character of irregularity, freedom, and unpredictability; one of the main characteristics is a free fantasy-like style unrestrained by a certain meter, tempo, and form in the context of long-standing keyboard literature and Romantic

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<sup>8</sup> For discussion of the musical "*capriccio*," see *Grove Music Online*, s.v. "Capriccio" by Erich Schwandt, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com>, accessed 29 January 2015; Ekkehard Mai and Joachim Rees, *Kunstform Capriccio* (Köln: W. König, 1998), see particularly the "*capriccio*" in music, 179–86; Roland Kanz, *Die Kunst des Capriccio*, (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2002), 50–53; Saari, "The Capriccio in Keyboard Music," 306–11; Jensen, "The Piano Capriccio, 1830–1860"; Schulenberg, "Composition and Improvisation in the School of J. S. Bach," *Bach Perspectives* 1 (1995): 1–42. The diversity of meanings of "*capriccio*" is also evident in the term used in visual arts and literature. For the discussion in this context, see among others, Veronica Maria White, "*Serio ludere*: Baroque *invenzione* and the Development of the Capriccio" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2009), which focuses on the term as a graphic invention in seventeenth-century visual arts.

virtuoso tradition. Liszt would have deliberately selected the associations with the term for a better approximation of the shimmering effects of the cimbalom, as in Examples 9.1 and 9.2 above. Moreover, it uncovers a potential similarity between the term's meaning from the two disparate traditions, Western European art music and Hungarian Gypsy music, representing his eclectic reliance upon the two traditions in a broader context.

Liszt's engagement with the tradition of *capriccio* in Western European art music becomes less significant than his deliberate references to Hungarian Gypsy-music tradition. The prevailing assessment of the *a capriccio* sections in his Rhapsodies acknowledges that the composer distinguishes them from others with respect to their improvisatory character and metric and notational freedom, in keeping with his attempts to capture performance practices and styles associated with Gypsy-band playing.<sup>9</sup> Although the general assessment has not illuminated specifically what Liszt refers to in those performance practices and styles of the model, his approach to the "*a capriccio*" for the cimbalom tremolos provides one facet of his conscious efforts to emulate cimbalom-playing.

Liszt carefully incorporates the designation in slow sections more prominently than in the faster ones, generally allotting them metric irregularity and rhapsodic style,

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<sup>9</sup> Erich Schwandt defines Liszt's "*a capriccio*" in a separate entry in *New Grove*: "A performance instruction permitting a free and rhapsodic approach to tempo and even style. Liszt used the phrase specifically to designate the metrical irregularity with which he attempted to reproduce folk music in his Hungarian rhapsodies (*lento a capriccio*)." Schwandt's idea of "folk music" that Liszt attempted to reproduce is, however, erroneous when we consider that Liszt was not interested in the revival of authentic Hungarian "folk" music but in the styles and practices associated with Hungarian popular Gypsy-band music, which he heard both directly and indirectly. Moreover, he had been drawn to what he believed and "imagined" in his Romanticized and individualized approach to the repertoire. Similarly, Liszt's "*a capriccio*" is also rendered as "metrical irregularity" by Gárdonyi and Szelényi, the editors of *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, XI. The editors further relate this particular designation to the broader issue of Liszt's breakthrough in notation, which deviated from the norm, together with his plentiful ornaments and rhythmic and agogic signs throughout. They claim that Liszt's unique approach to notation, as represented in his "*a capriccio*" sections, provided an effective means for him to capture "graphically" the characteristics and performance practices peculiar to the Gypsy ensemble.

thwarting any sense of regularity, rigidity, and restraint.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, the marking also appears in a fast tempo and witty character in Liszt's Rhapsodies.<sup>11</sup> The two contrasting meanings and characters can relate to the term "*capriccio*" as used by nineteenth-century composers; for example, Paganini denotes a virtuosic rhapsodic style, Mendelssohn a witty and humorous style.<sup>12</sup> More importantly, the contrasting characters also help heighten the distinctive stylistic traits of Hungarian Gypsy music; among them, the free style of the shimmering cimbalom tremolos, a distinctive *rubato*-style in a slow tempo known as *hallgató* style, and in contrast, a rapid percussive effect in a fast tempo. In the later part of the current chapter, we will examine another instance of the slow *a capriccio* section, which portrays the image of an improvisatory cimbalom player in the *rubato*-style of Gypsy performance.

### *Cimbalom tremolos continue*

Aside from the prominent role of the cimbalom shimmering as in Examples 9.1 and 9.2 above, Liszt deploys the cimbalom tremolos as harmonic support to provide a steady, sustained, and unbroken layer of sound against which a melody unfolds. Liszt also

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<sup>10</sup> Examples are the openings of Nos. 2, 7, 8, 11, part of the opening of No. 14, and the passage in between the slow and fast section in No. 10.

<sup>11</sup> Examples include that in the fast section of No. 14.

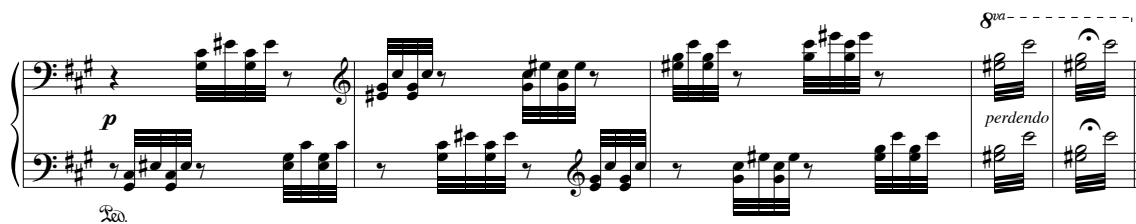
<sup>12</sup> For the Paganini association, see Paganini's use of the term in his 24 *Caprices*, Op. 1 (ca. 1810) that follows earlier traditions of technical and virtuosic studies, as practiced by Pietro Antonio Locatelli, as well as the idea of extended virtuoso solo passages and a fully written-out cadenza in concertos and sonatas. For a discussion of Locatelli, see Joan Luce, "The Virtuosity and Unique Role of the Caprices for Solo Violin in Pietro Locatelli's *L'arte del violino*" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 1975). For the witty character of the term, see examples of Mendelssohn's *capriccio*-designated compositions, including his *Capriccio*, Op. 5 (1837), marked by short repetitive rhythmic motives and sharp *staccatos*. Saari, "Capriccio in Keyboard Music," 309. Schumann and Brahms also continued to reserve the term for a humorous or fanciful character in their short piano pieces; Schwandt, "Capriccio."

incorporates cimbalom tremolos into the passage that fills the void of the “long pause” of Example 9.3a and its *ossia* in Example 9.3b.

Example 9.3a. Liszt, Rhapsody, No. 2, “*lunga pausa*”



Example 9.3b. Liszt, Rhapsody, No. 2, *ossia* of “*lunga pausa*”<sup>13</sup>



At first sight Liszt would have thought of the cimbalom tremolos as a useful means to sustain the sound for the long-held chords of the keyboard, while suggesting a cadenza-like passage for the instrument. The typical function of the keyboard idiom as an effective filler or cadenza is reconsidered in Liszt’s Rhapsodies. The tremolos serve not just as the traditional “filler” or a cadenza but also as a stylistic marker to portray the image of the cimbalom player. We can recall the examples from Allaga’s method book, which illustrate the wide-ranging tremolos that involve the player’s unique tactile

<sup>13</sup> *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, eds. Gárdonyi and Szelényi; not present in the first edition published by Bartholf Senff in Leipzig in 1851, Ruth Dana Collection of Liszt Editions, Vol. 6.

movement and visual effect, as well as the excerpts from Pressel's article, in which the sustained notes serve as effective places where the cimbalom player comes to the forefront by deploying his vibrating sounds. The imaginary cimbalom player here once again finds an opportunity to show off the distinctively glittering sound of his instrument.

*Liszt's layout of tremolos in comparison with a contemporary arranger's*

Revisiting Example 9.2 of the shimmering tremolos, Liszt's layout is comparable to that of one of his contemporary arrangers in the well-known example of *Rákóczi* lament, as illustrated in Example 9.4, published first by Gábor Mátray (1826).

Example 9.4. *Rákóczi* lament as published by Gábor Mátray (1826)<sup>14</sup>



Liszt's version of Example 9.2 distinguishes itself from Example 9.4 in the way the composer treats the cimbalom player. In the 1826 version of the *Rákóczi* lament, the composer–arranger delineates the Gypsy-band instruments in a typical pianistic texture: the right hand unfolds the ornamented melody, which is typically played by the violin or

<sup>14</sup> Sarosi, *Gypsy Music*, 104; Szabolcsi, *A Concise History*, 159–61.

the clarinet in the Gypsy tradition, while the left hand displays a rolled-chord accompaniment to guide a harmonic motion in the background. This material serves as a skeleton upon which elements intrinsic to the model instrument or ensemble are then transplanted. In other words, while the soloist's embellished tune is vertically aligned with the subservient instruments' harmonic support usually in uniform and slow rhythmic patterns or sustained chords, the cimbalom tremolos are frequently layered with them, migrating from one register to another and lending an additional layer of distinct sounds in conjunction with other instrumental sounds. In addition, the cimbalom figurations in this setting concentrate on monotonously reiterated tremolos, relying for the figurations' harmonic and melodic contents mostly on the first violin or the clarinet and the bass.

Whereas the cimbalom player in the *Rákóczi* lament is relegated to a subordinate role to the first violin, Liszt's version is centered on the cimbalom player. Liszt's attention to the cimbalom in a solo capacity, as discussed earlier, is immediately recognizable by means of the prominent incessant tremolos. His interest in the cimbalom solo becomes more convincing when we compare his treatment of the tremolos with that of the arranger of the *Rákóczi* lament. Liszt radically eliminates other instrumental textures or sounds, instead focusing almost solely on the cimbalom player and his own color and texture.

Moreover, Liszt's emphasis on the cimbalom solo leads him to diverge from the existing model in his individual approach to the delineation of material in the piano score. In other words, adherence to the typical keyboard texture becomes less significant for Liszt than the effort to capture the model instrument more effectively. If the arranger of the *Rákóczi* lament regarded the cimbalom tremolos merely as one element of a

distinctive Gypsy-band sound, Liszt excerpts the cimbalom's role from the Gypsy band and makes it come to the forefront for his version. If the *Rákóczi* lament illustrates that the arranger attempted to reshape the elements as intrinsic to the model instrument or ensemble in order to fit into a typical keyboard texture and idiom, as expected in the field of piano arrangements, Liszt does not restrict himself to the conventional keyboard vocabulary and layout in order to reflect the sound of the cimbalom. His deep interest in the model instrument in turn prompts his novel approach to notation, texture, and figuration for his own rendering.

*Pianistic tremolos in a spectrum of Liszt's reworkings*

To conclude this discussion of the distinctive tremolos intended to evoke the cimbalom sounds in Liszt's Rhapsodies, the tremolos invite a comparison with those used especially to approximate the string tremolos in his earlier orchestral arrangements. Then how can we determine the difference? In his piano oeuvre throughout his career, tremolos had provided a useful source for Liszt to extend the conventional idiom to an unprecedented level, as illustrated in the twelfth of the *Grandes Études*, in which he deployed extended, steady, and shimmering tremolos.<sup>15</sup> In his orchestral arrangements under study, the tremolos served as one of the significant idiomatic figurations for Liszt's reworking techniques. As observed earlier in the examples from the Beethoven and Berlioz *partitions* (Examples 2.7–2.10 and 3.13), Liszt's substitutes for orchestral tremolos function to fill out the pauses in the melodic part, give harmonic support during long-held

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<sup>15</sup> Samson, *Virtuosity*, 91, sees the tremolos as eliciting almost the Impressionist characteristics associated with Ravel. Janita, "Introduction," in *Collected Writings of Franz Liszt*, II, 23, however, uses the same example in relation to Liszt's indebtedness to Paganini's practices and techniques.



notes, and compensate for the rapid decay of tone on the keyboard, ultimately sustaining the interest and intensity of the sound of the model orchestral compositions. Moreover, as illustrated in Examples 2.9b and 3.13b, on occasion Liszt transforms the tremolos into astonishingly virtuosic figurations to suggest his further amplification of the orchestra sonority or his reinterpretation and recreation in his own pianistic terms.

In his Rhapsodies, tremolos share functions with those in his earlier orchestral arrangements: they fill out the musical texture, accompany the melody as a harmonic background, and thus maintain or increase intensity of the sound. Yet it is intriguing that in his earlier orchestral arrangements, the tremolos are often refashioned to meet the expectations of the pianist by becoming more pianistic and virtuosic; in contrast, the cimbalom tremolos often betray such expectation. The tremolos are intended to evoke distinctively Hungarian Gypsy-music style, as we observed in Liszt's scrupulous approach to the characteristic playing of the tremolos. He carefully divides the two hands in emulation of the hammers on the cimbalom, refers to the distinctive physical and visual effect stemming from the unique layout of pitches of the instrument, and uses various notational devices and pianistic resources to render the cimbalom tremolos effectively. Moreover, as in Examples 9.1 and 9.2, Liszt extends the cimbalom tremolos to a solo level, making them prominent and independent in a self-contained section.

In conclusion, the common thread of the tremolo figuration throughout the repertoire is not only Liszt's successful and convincing solutions to the change of medium in his transferral process but also his expansion and elevation of the stereotypical pianistic idioms to more artistic and creative ones for his own purpose. Behind the conventional figuration lies Liszt's aspiration to construe the piano as a "microcosm" of

all the sounds.<sup>16</sup> Through this capability of the instrument, the piano puts itself on an equal footing with an orchestra—whether a Western art orchestra or a Hungarian Gypsy band or orchestra. More importantly, Liszt’s inventive renderings of the figuration, as examined in the instances above, demonstrate both his close adherence to the model and his own interpretation of it in pianistic terms. At the same time, it is also worth observing his different approach to the tremolo figuration in accordance with its corresponding model. He tended to make the string tremolos more adjusted to the typical keyboard idioms in his earlier orchestral arrangements, heightening his virtuosic keyboard figurations, whereas in the Rhapsodies he attempts to faithfully preserve the sonorous properties of the cimbalom, paradoxically while at the same time using those properties to experiment with the typical keyboard vocabulary.

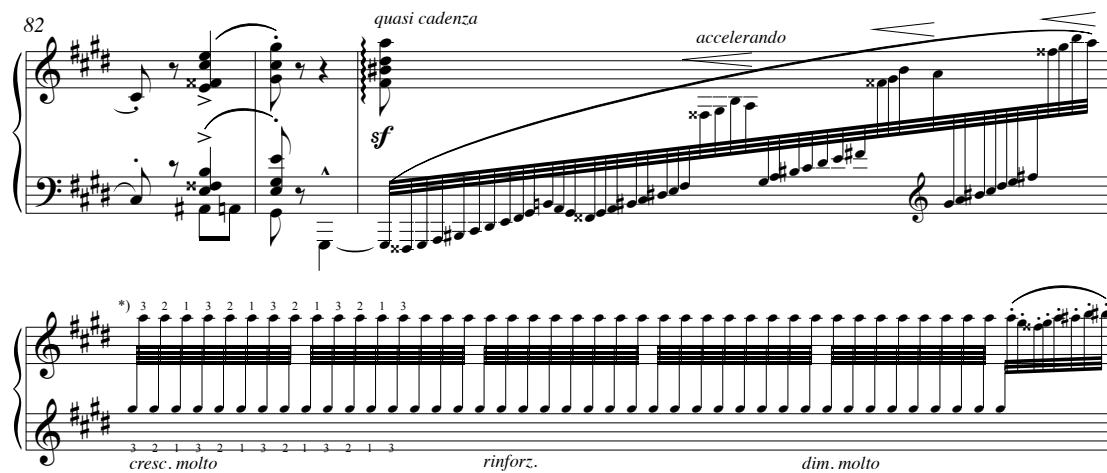
## **(2) Cimbalom Trills and Their Visual Effect**

The imaginary cimbalom player performs trills in a visually stunning way, as illustrated in Example 9.5a.

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<sup>16</sup> The term “microcosm” comes from Liszt’s letter to Adolphe Pietet in 1838: “Thus the piano has, on the one hand, the capacity to assimilate, to concentrate all musical life within itself and, on the other, its own existence, its own growth and individual developments. It is simultaneously, as an ancient Greek might say, a *microcosm* and a *microthea* (a miniature world and a miniature god).” Liszt, *An Artist’s Journey*, 47.

Example 9.5a. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 2, mm. 82–84



The passage is centered on the two chromatic pitches of A and G#. Although the result is a “trill” sound, Liszt’s specific fingering avoids the customary playing of a pianistic trill with two fingers of the same hand. Instead, Liszt uses alternating hands the way a cimbalom player would. Example 9.5a thus aims for a spectacle associated with cimbalom playing: the visual effect is prescribed by the rapid hammering with the hands in alternation and the repetitive 3–2–1 fingering. The Lisztian pianistic flourishes reach a culmination in the repeating notes that distinctively evoke one cimbalom technique, as if two hands were acting like the cimbalom itself. Liszt’s rendering is essentially a trill but it is executed as on a cimbalom.

Liszt’s fingering generates a different way of playing the standard pianistic trill, contributing to the idea of his expansion of technical innovations. The spectacle of the passage thus stems from Liszt’s novel approach to compositional method through changes of performance style. A similar situation has already been noted in the earlier instances of Liszt’s rendering of Beethoven’s symphonies (in Chapter 2), contributing to

one of the common threads in Liszt's reworking methods across the repertoire under study.<sup>17</sup> In Example 9.5a, however, Liszt's unique approach to the fingering and delineation of the two hands represents not just his attempts to develop his individual pianistic techniques but to transfer the hammering of the cimbalom player convincingly to the piano score, capturing its actual swift physical motions, articulated sound, and delicate timbres. Liszt's faithful attitudes toward the model are complementary with his innovative approach to rendering it on the piano.

The technique and effect associated with the cimbalom in Liszt's rendering of Example 9.5a was already noted by contemporary reviewers, as Eduard Hanslick reported when he observed a similar technique in Liszt's performance:

[T]he Allegro offered many astounding effects exclusively associated with Liszt, such as the hammering with both hands on a single key and the characteristic imitation of the cimbalom. The way he reproduces the sound effects of this favorite and basic Hungarian instrument is quite inimitable.<sup>18</sup>

Although Hanslick did not refer specifically to the passage of Example 9.5a—because it occurs in the Andante section of the composition, which also has its fast section marked Vivace—he immediately grasped from Liszt's performance the sounds, effects, and techniques that emulate the brilliant cimbalom repetition. It is also noteworthy that Hanslick describes a stunning spectacle generated from Liszt's performance manner of “hammering with both hands on a single key,” which was in turn used to “reproduce” the effect of the cimbalom.

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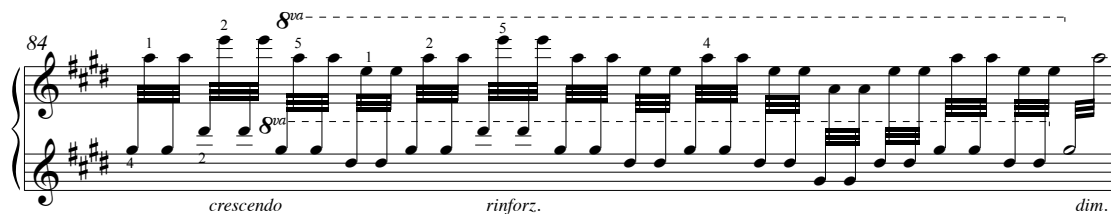
<sup>17</sup> For the earlier examples, see Chapter 2, Example 2.4.

<sup>18</sup> Eduard Hanslick, *Vienna's Golden Years of Music*, trans. and ed. Henry Pleasants III (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1950), 113–14; quoted in Leach, “The Cimbalom,” 139 and also in Astaire, “Searching,” 80–81.

The spectacle was nonetheless ubiquitous in the discourse on Liszt's performances during his virtuoso years in the 1830s and 1840s, as observed in the performance anecdotes about his earlier orchestral arrangements in the repertoire under study. Yet it is important to note that in this case, the visual effect specifically aims to illuminate a particular physical manner of performance, sound, and technique associated with the Gypsy cimbalom player. Liszt deliberately divides the two adjacent notes between the hands, rapidly alternating them and assigning detailed fingering to the notes. Consequently, his reworking process reshapes the standard pianistic trill to lend the impression of the Gypsy cimbalom player hammering his two mallets swiftly on his instrument. The result of Liszt's rendering, however, simultaneously is truly his unique combination of compositional technique and performance manner.

Liszt further develops the passage of Example 9.5a into a more brilliant one, as in its *ossia* shown in Example 9.5b. Like the trills of Example 9.5a, this passage of Example 9.5b again evokes repeated strikes on one string of the cimbalom, yet the trill sounds are now interspersed into a wider register of the keyboard.

Example 9.5b. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 2, m. 84, replacement of the sixty-fourth notes



Liszt's layout of the trill sounds thus reflects his knowledge of the essence of the cimbalom: the same two strings on the opposite side of the bridge (see Figure 8.4). In

other words, moving by a fifth is cimbalom-like, because on the cimbalom two “halves” of one string, on opposite sides of the middle bridge, are often a fifth apart, and thus moving up a fifth can be as simple as moving across the bridge on the same string while playing the instrument. The result of Liszt’s rendering involves more choreography of the pianist, inviting more visual effect of his or her playing. This is precisely what makes it cimbalom-like, while the passage on the surface immediately contributes to the virtuosic Lisztian pianistic writing. His expansion of the cimbalom trills and his exploitation of his two hands and ten fingers are all reminiscent of the technical tricks that the earlier cimbalom virtuoso Hebenstreit exhibited with his sticks. At the same time, Liszt further heightens the peculiar tactile movement of the cimbalom playing and its effect by substituting idiomatic equivalents to cimbalom technique.

Examples 9.5a and 9.5b demonstrate how Liszt deploys the tactile and visual components, along with the aural element, associated with the cimbalom in order to provide a fuller experience of the Gypsy cimbalom player for both the performer and audience; and simultaneously he never fails to grasp the opportunity to integrate the elements intrinsic to the model instrument into his own virtuosic keyboard idioms.

### **(3) Cimbalom Flourishes and Their Distinctive Contour**

The cimbalom player frequently displays a flurry of brilliant passagework with rapidly running scales or colorful arpeggios. When the cimbalom flourishes are transferred to the piano score, however, they are not clearly distinguishable from cadenza-like passages, which are prevalent in Liszt’s Rhapsodies and also in his virtuosic piano compositions in general. Moreover, the first violin of a Gypsy band plays such brilliant passagework just

as often as the cimbalom does. Thus the score reading of the virtuosic passagework at first glance may indicate that nothing stands out as peculiarly characteristic of the cimbalom player. The bravura filigree can be construed simply as Liszt's indulgence in showing off, as it has generally viewed. Or, although we interpret it through the particular lens of Hungarian Gypsy music, it could be a rendering of playing by either the violinist or the cimbalom player.

But then what makes the seemingly conventional bravura passagework sound particularly like cimbalom flourishes? One way to explicate it is to consider how a cimbalom player would play it. In order to realize any fast passage the cimbalom player must rapidly alternate the two hands and hammers. The player is required to be reliant on the repetition of a certain pattern. As illustrated in Example 9.6, Liszt's version emulates a consistent pattern of cimbalom playing in a rapid hand-over-hand motion of L–R–L–R or R–L–R–L (R: right hand; L: left hand). The repeating pattern is further prescribed by the repetitive 4–3–2–1 fingering

Example 9.6. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 12, cimbalom flourishes just before Vivace

The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in two systems. The first system features a treble and bass staff. The treble staff contains a complex melodic line with numerous sixteenth and thirty-second notes, accompanied by fingerings (1-4) and a 'Soprano' (Sopr.) label. The bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and a melodic line. The second system continues the piece, with the treble staff showing a continuation of the melodic line and the bass staff featuring a more active role with chords and a melodic line. The score concludes with a final chord and a '1' indicating a first ending or repeat.

Another way to understand why the repeating pattern is specifically cimbalom-like is to draw on a stylistic marker in the tradition of the *style hongrois*. In Schubert's deployment of the cimbalom flurry in his *Divertissement* (Example 8.8), it was the repeating pattern of the up-and-down melodic contour that made it specifically sound like a cimbalom player in the midst of free and rhapsodic passages.

Had the virtuoso Liszt intended to create a purely virtuosic effect, he would have written far more brilliant pianistic effusions instead of the passagework that insists on the repeating pattern 4–3–2–1. By taking into consideration Liszt's reference to the cimbalom player's technique, and by understanding that the virtuoso cimbalom frequently deploys bravura passagework based on a repeating contour, the ostensibly conventional virtuosic passages for piano have gained new meaning related to cimbalom playing.

Liszt would have sought to integrate not only the idiomatic figuration of the cimbalom but also the cimbalom player's repeating movement of his hammers into the virtuosic keyboard idioms. The same physical pattern is repeated in different places on the cimbalom. Liszt's lightly touched, intricate pianistic filigree is appropriately used to render the delicate movement and sound of cimbalom playing. Liszt would have seen the potential similarity between the virtuosic keyboard idiom and the virtuosic cimbalom idiom, assimilating the two from disparate traditions into his own piano version. Through his integration Liszt comes to achieve an extraordinary visual and aural impact on the audience: not only the tactile quality of the cimbalom but also the acoustic aspect of the instrument and the repetition of a physical gesture capture the eyes and ears of the audience.



*Liszt's notation for cimbalom flourishes*

The cimbalom flourishes of Example 9.6 provide another example of Liszt's unusual approach to notation, along with the instances related to the cimbalom shimmering written with temporal freedom, as discussed above. Liszt's novel approach to notation throughout his Rhapsodies is illustrated particularly in the numerous virtuosic "cadenzas" and the sections like a "Preludio" (No. 10). These passages are often written with small note values that do not agree with the indicated time-signature, making the notation devoid of rigid meter and rhythm. The result of such a notation is brilliant filigree on a surface level. For this reason, the passages are generally interpreted or even criticized as tasteless showpieces intended for displaying the virtuoso's technical skills. The technical extravagance on a surface level, however, becomes less significant than the underlying purpose of the free writing on a deeper level: in the case of cimbalom flourishes, Liszt's attempts to render the particular contour or swift scale passagework of cimbalom playing in a recognizable manner. He was attempting to make us notice that it is an imitation of the cimbalom.

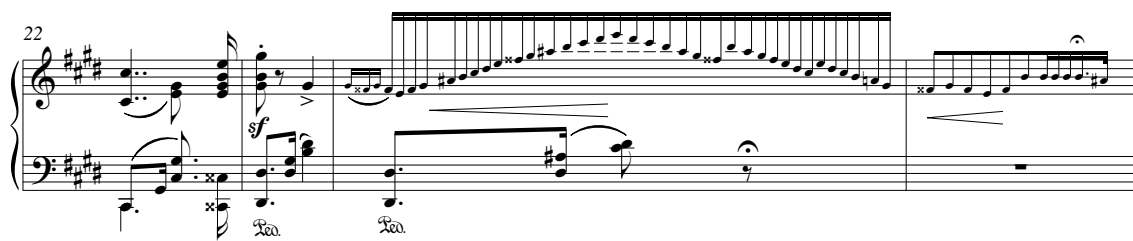
Liszt's notational approach to the previously mentioned cimbalom tremolos and the cimbalom flourishes is somewhat different; the former entail more specifics in designations that are all associated with temporal freedom and flexibility, including the marking *a capriccio*, whereas the latter immediately give an idea of bravura filigree written in small notes and in a way that cannot be mistaken for any other virtuosic passagework. Nevertheless, the common thread of the two groups of cimbalom renderings is that Liszt's "liberal" notation fundamentally stems from his "faithful"

attempts to capture the essential and peculiar characteristics of the cimbalom sounds and techniques.

#### (4) Cimbalom Repetition and Single-note Hammering

In several instances in the Rhapsodies, it is striking that Liszt deploys an essentially non-pianistic figuration, that is, simply reiterating a single note. Its visual and aural impact is sensational, particularly when it appears amidst the quintessentially “Lisztian” pianistic figurations that are prevalent. As illustrated in Example 9.7a, the pianistic flourishes lead to a distinctively non-pianistic peroration with single-pitch repetition.

Example 9.7a. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 2, mm. 22–24



Behind the unidiomatic figuration for the piano lies Liszt’s deliberate purpose for it. As observed earlier in the excerpt of single-note tremolos from Allaga’s method book (Example 8.2b), it approximates another important stylistic trait of cimbalom playing, single-note hammering, which requires a natural rebounding of one hammer. Note that single-note hammering is initiated with turning figuration under a *crescendo*. The melodic turn, as illustrated in the examples from Pressel’s article and Allaga’s method book (Examples 8.6b and 8.7), is essential to the cimbalom, because it is easy to leave one hammer playing on a string while the other hammer changes strings.

The fermata suggests a *rubato* style of performance; but more importantly, it makes the single-note hammering more poignant, conveying a melancholic quality. In fact, such an emotional charge in a *rubato* style is often highlighted in an actual performance of the single-note reiteration. Modern Liszt pianists from the early to mid-twentieth century frequently rendered this single-pitch hammering in a more emphatic and sophisticated manner than is notated in the score.<sup>19</sup> For instance, Georges Cziffra, a Hungarian Rom from a family of musicians, extends the hammering and also articulating every nuance of each note.<sup>20</sup> This kind of interpretation is even more convincing if we consider Liszt's *ossia* for the passage above, shown in Example 9.7b, which further illuminates the nicety of the cimbalom hammering in its extended version. The marking of *ritardando* conveys Liszt's awareness that the cimbalom hammering and rebounds make the single-note passage a natural *ritardando*.

Example 9.7b. Liszt, Rhapsody, No. 2, *ossia* for m. 24

The musical score for Example 9.7b is presented in two systems. The top system features a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a fermata over a single note, followed by a series of eighth notes. The bottom system features a bass clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It begins with a single note and a fermata, followed by a series of eighth notes. The score includes markings for 'accelerando' and 'rit.' (ritardando). Above the top system, there are two annotations: '\* ) Statt Takt 24:' and '\* ) In place of bar24:'. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time.

<sup>19</sup> This performance practice is noted in Astaire, "Searching," 80.

<sup>20</sup> For the recording, see Georges Cziffra, *Liszt, 10 Hungarian Rhapsodies* (EMI Classics, 2001).

The performance of the cimbalom hammering requires more interpretation that goes beyond its written context in the score, because it tends to entail a gradual process of acceleration and deceleration in speed, increase and decrease in intensity, and *crescendo* and *decrescendo* in dynamics. The way modern Liszt pianists rendered the passage above provides only one possibility of interpretation.

Liszt's response to the performance manner of the cimbalom hammering was, first of all, to provide his detailed notational devices on a surface level. The devices include not only the designations *crescendo*, *decrescendo*, *ritardando*, and fermatas but also the visual image of the hammering isolated from the major musical discourse in his score. All of them are used to convey a convincing imitation of the cimbalom explicitly; in turn, they demand a particular execution from the pianist.

The single-note hammering in Examples 9.7a and 9.7b occurs over a short span, yet its succinct appearance has maximum impact on the musical discourse, particularly when it is juxtaposed with the extensive bravura passages. Liszt's rendering in the end emphasizes the "foreign" or "exotic" quality of the unidiomatic idiom in the midst of the typical virtuosic keyboard idioms.<sup>21</sup> His reworking thus suggests that the "foreign" and "exotic" is situated on an equal footing with the Romantic keyboard tradition, elevating the former to the level of the latter or even making the former surpass the latter.

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<sup>21</sup> Liszt himself called Hungarian Gypsy music "exotic" in his *Gypsy in Music*, 364. See the discussion of Liszt's interest in Gypsy music in the broader context of Romantic exoticism in Locke, *Musical Exoticism*, particularly pp. 135–49. The term "foreign" is borrowed from the Romantic theory of language, particularly promoted by Novalis and Friedrich Schlegel; see Antoine Berman, *The Experience of the Foreign*, trans. S. Heyvaert (New York: State University of New York Press, 1992), 98, which quotes one of Novalis's statements: "The spirit strives to absorb the stimulus. The foreign attracts it. Metamorphosis of what is foreign into what is one's own; thus appropriation is the incessant activity of the spirit." Novalis uses this statement as part of his description of Romantic fragments, but this can be extrapolated into the arranger's act of appropriating the distant and foreign to the familiar, or the consumer's interest in learning the foreign.

### (5) Cimbalom Repetition In Fast Sections and Its Percussive Effect

In the performance of the Gypsy band, it is customary for both the violinist and the cimbalom player to interact each other to build up the intensity in a fast section. In his *Des bohémiens*, Liszt enthused about the wild and ecstatic fast aspects of Gypsy-band playing, which had a “fury of excitement” that ultimately reached a point “almost to delirium.”

After that they [Gypsy players] started imitating castanets by cracking the joints of their fingers, which are always long and charged with eccentricity. Still uncertain, they began throwing their caps into the air, following this by strutting about like peacocks. Then, they started examining the animals again; when, suddenly, as if incited by a gratitude which they had all the while been trying to express and the true manifestation of which had only just occurred to them, they had recourse to a nobler medium. Flying to their violins and cymbals [cimbaloms], they began a real fury of excitement. The Frischka [*friss*] was not long in rising to a frenzy or exaltation; and, then, almost to delirium. In its final stage it could only be compared to that vertiginous and convulsive wheeling motion which is the culmination point in the Dervish ecstasy.<sup>22</sup>

Amidst the development of musical intensity, Example 9.8 draws our attention to the capacity of the cimbalom player.

Example 9.8. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 13, cimbalom “hammering”

165 3 2 1 3 2 1 2 1 4 3 2 1 4 3 2 1 3 2 1 2 1 4 3 2 1 4  
p leggiero marcato la melodia

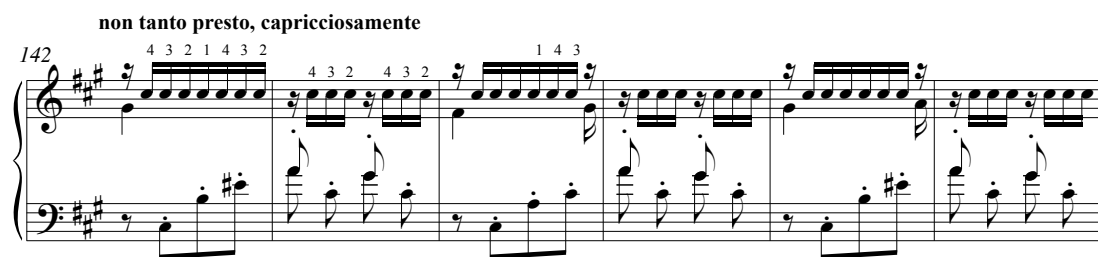
170 [1] 3 2 1 3 2 1 2 1 3 2 1 3 2 1 2 1

<sup>22</sup> Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 138.

When considering the intense interaction between the violinist and the cimbalom player, typical of playing the passage above could be that the violinist plays the melody, and at the same time the cimbalom player emphasizes the notes that comprise the melody. Yet the cimbalom player is also capable of rendering both the melody and the rhythm. As demonstrated earlier in the examples of single-note hammering (Examples 8.2b and 9.7a–7b), the same trick is applicable here. The cimbalom player could use the natural, immediate rebounding with one hammer. The note is hit, rebounds, and is automatically hit again.

The imaginary cimbalom player strikes the strings swiftly in a *moto-perpetuo* rhythm, exploiting the rebounding of a hammer and thus creating a percussive effect. The immediacy and subtlety of rebounding requires the player’s control of a delicate motion that can nevertheless be repeated rapidly. Liszt captures the technical challenges through his non-pianistic repetition articulated in a meticulous fingering. A similar situation continues in Example 9.9.

Example 9.9. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 2, cimbalom “hammering”



In both Examples 9.8 and 9.9, Liszt was fully aware of a particular cimbalom technique that challenges the player to realize a consistent and sophisticated rebound of one hammer. Both examples are aligned with the earlier examples of single-note hammering,

yet appear in a completely different character. Whereas the previous hammering in a slow section conveys a melancholic sound in a nuanced manner of dynamics and *ritardando*, this hammering in a fast section is percussive, full of excitement, and concentrated on a *moto-perpetuo* rhythm.

## (6) Cimbalom Player and Interaction with The Violinist

The cimbalom frequently appears within the context of a duet with the violinist.

Example 9.10a provides a particularly distinctive texture for demonstrating how Liszt superimposes the two disparate features that might evoke the violinist and the cimbalom player, respectively, on top of each other.

Example 9.10a. Liszt, Rhapsody No. 3, Allegretto

Allegretto [♩ = 100] poco rit

17 *pp* [1 5 5 4 4 3 3 2] [2 1 4 1 2 1 4 1] una corda

19 *ppp* quasi cadenza 8va

Liszt maintains the division between the hands, distinguishing each through a unique set of figurations, articulations, and performance directions. The left hand insists on the broken-chord figuration that elicits a tremolo-like sound, performed in a soft dynamic

with the aid of both *una corda* and damper pedal. The synthesis of these elements is reminiscent of the cimbalom shimmering of Examples 9.1 and 9.2 above. Yet if the tremolos of the previous examples have focused on the cimbalom virtuoso in a solo capacity, those in Example 9.10a reveal how the cimbalom tremolos can be used as a distinctive sound of an accompaniment when they are combined with other instruments: in this case, the violin.

The left and right hands of the passage might evoke the cimbalom player and the violinist, respectively. Whereas the left hand provides the resonating sound of the cimbalom tremolos, the right hand exhibits a more articulated *staccato* passage that evokes the *spiccato* melody of a Gypsy violinist. The imaginary violinist's virtuosic effusions appear further in the following "*quazi cadenza*" passages that are interspersed or alternate with *staccato* passages throughout (only one alternation is shown in Example 9.10a). The passage as shown in Example 9.10a thus lends the impression of the two players interacting with each other and creating a peculiar coalescence of sounds.

If Example 9.10a displays an "imaginary" interaction between the cimbalom player and the violinist, Example 9.10b below presents an actual interaction between the two instruments in Liszt's later orchestral composition, *Ungarischer Sturmmarsch* ("Hungarian Attack March," 1876). In this composition, as mentioned earlier, the composer for the first time incorporated a part for the actual cimbalom, presumably Schunda's modern chromatic one, into the standard European orchestral instruments.



Example 9.10b. Liszt, *Hungarian Attack March*, 5 measures after Rehearsal G

The musical score for Example 9.10b, Liszt's *Hungarian Attack March*, 5 measures after Rehearsal G, is a full orchestral score. It includes parts for Bsn., Hn. (F), Cym., Trgl., Vln. I, Vln. II, Viola, Cello, and D. B. The key signature is one flat (B-flat major or D minor). The tempo is marked 'Allegretto' and the dynamic is 'p' (piano). The score shows a complex texture with multiple layers of articulation and figuration. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts are marked 'mp grazioso arco' and 'sempre stacc.' (sempre staccato). The Cello part is marked 'mf marc.' (marcato). The D. B. part is marked 'p'.

We can see immediately the resemblances between the two examples in tempo, dynamic, and most of all, texture: the soft dynamic, the light tempo (*Allegretto* in Example 9.10a and *Allegro* in Example 9.10b), and the particular texture that combines the two independent sets of articulation and figuration. All these resemblances help to support the claim that Liszt would have envisioned the interplay of the two instruments in such a light, delicate fashion earlier than his composition of the passage for his Rhapsody No. 3 (Example 9.10a)

The peculiar texture of Liszt's piano version of Example 9.10a engenders a dilemma for the performance: how to realize simultaneously the *staccato* melody and

tremolos in a sustained pedal, which are contradictory to each other in pianistic execution. Liszt's rendering thus does not meet the expectations of the pianist, but instead pushes beyond the traditional techniques of the pianist. The reason that Liszt does not restrict himself within the boundaries of conventional piano technique emerges from his attempts to maintain the independent components of the Gypsy-band idioms: the techniques of the cimbalom player and the violinist. The result of his attempts is an astounding coalescence of timbral interplay between the two instruments in his piano score. His genuine approach to the elements as simultaneously integral to the Gypsy-band music once again prompts an individual approach to the technique and performing manner of the pianist.

Example 9.10a also illustrates how Liszt treats the cimbalom player distinctively in relation to the violinist. On a surface level, Liszt treats the cimbalom player as equivalent to the violinist. In his enthusiastic description of the cimbalom player, as discussed earlier, Liszt emphasizes the various capabilities of the cimbalom player, one of them being his principal role on a par with the first violinist (see Chapter 8). On a deeper level, not only are the two instruments equal partners but also their unique relationship is present in Liszt's version.

It is intriguing that the violinist–cimbalom player relationship is somewhat different from the same situation in a classical-tradition ensemble with respect to types of texture and scoring. For example, in the case of the violin and the keyboard in the keyboard trios of Haydn, when the two instruments are treated as equal partners, the common types of scoring and textures include the two instruments in a parallel motion in intervals of thirds or sixths, in dialogue by dividing the theme, or exchanging the material

in repetition or canonic imitation.<sup>23</sup> The violinist and cimbalom player of Gypsy band, however, is less associated with the system of the classical ensemble, although the Western-art music elements to a certain degree became absorbed into the creation of Gypsy-band music. Their interaction is reliant less upon the balance in alternation or division of musical material than on the independence of their own technique, texture, and timbre, through which a unique combination of sounds is heard. In addition, when the independence of the two main instruments remains in a classical ensemble, it is present frequently in contrapuntal textures. In contrast, the two soloists of the Gypsy band—whether they are a violinist and cimbalom player or sometimes a clarinet—are rarely interweaved in imitative or contrapuntal fabric. Rather, the emphasis of their relationship is on their own identity and texture, the resulting being a colorful coalescence of sound.

### **(7) Cimbalom Improvisation and *Hallgató* Style**

*Hallgató* style denotes a distinctive type of rhapsodic playing of the Gypsy band in a slow piece or section.<sup>24</sup> As Bálint Sárosi describes, *hallgató* melody is abundant “with runs, languid pauses, sustained or snapped off notes, virtually pull[ing] the original structure [of a tune] apart.”<sup>25</sup> *Hallgató* style is characterized by widely arched and free melodies, evoking an “instrumental fantasy.”<sup>26</sup> The style is hardly reliant on rules, but

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<sup>23</sup> Katalin Komlós, “Haydn’s Keyboard Trios Hob. XV: 5–17: Interaction between Texture and Form,” *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 28 (1986): 351–400, at 359–72.

<sup>24</sup> The style—the name means “to be listened to” in Hungarian—originally refers to a melody that has become independent of its original text. Sárosi, *Gypsy Music* 245; Bellman, “Toward a Lexicon,” 220–21.

<sup>25</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 245; also quoted in Bellman, 221.

<sup>26</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 245.

instead occurs spontaneously.<sup>27</sup> Examples 9.11a and 9.11b illustrate a popular song rendered in a slow tempo, as elaborated by a Gypsy clarinetist, Sándor Burka, in a Budapest restaurant in 1979.<sup>28</sup> In Example 9.11b, the notes taken most directly from the original song are shown with larger noteheads, and the rapidly moving embellishing passages with smaller noteheads, to clarify the relationship to the original melody. Although it is a modern example associated with an urban Gypsy style, as Judit Frigyesi points out it also reflects the style that was prevalent in the latter part of the nineteenth century.<sup>29</sup> It may well also be applicable to Liszt's time in mid-century.

Example 9.11a. The third and fourth phrase of the song *Kilencet ütött az óra*<sup>30</sup>



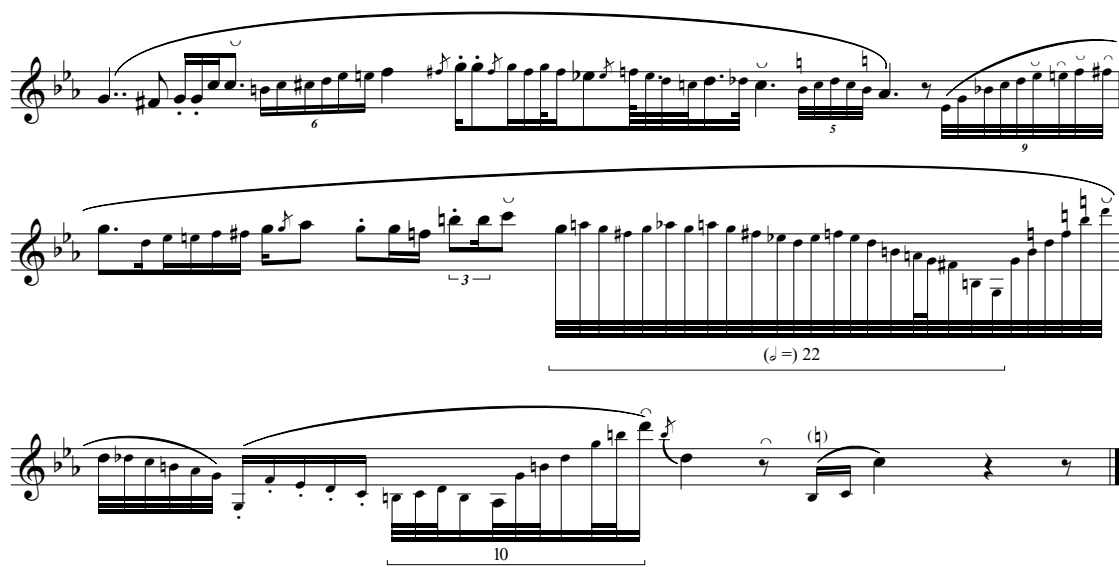
<sup>27</sup> For the discussion of the spontaneous expression as the true Hungarian feeling, see David E. Schneider, "Tradition Maintained: Nationalism, Verbunkos, Kossuth, and the Rhapsody, Op. 1," in the author's book *Bartók, Hungary, and the Renewal of Tradition: Case Studies in the Intersection of Modernity and Nationality* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 33–80, at 53–55.

<sup>28</sup> Frigyesi, *Béla Bartók*, 246.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> Sárosi, *Folk Music: Hungarian Musical Idiom* ([Budapest]: Corvina, 1986), 56–57.

Example 9.11b. Instrumental embellishment of the corresponding tune<sup>31</sup>



Frigyessi notes that the performance of slow pieces by the restaurant Gypsy band had developed a particular performing practice that “relied heavily on rubato, ornamentation, tempo changes, and display of virtuosity.”<sup>32</sup> As in Example 9.11b, the overarching phrase in *hallgató* style is profusely ornamented with melodic turns and runs, unfolding in a constant process of elaboration without any formal restraint and proceeding at a leisurely tempo.

The ornamentation is a significant element that characterizes *hallgató* style. The art of ornamentation is fundamental to both Western art music and Hungarian Gypsy music, and by extension to all types of music. Yet at the same time instrumental ornamentation and embellishments played an indispensable and crucial role in the

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 57

<sup>32</sup> Frigyessi, *Béla Bartók*, 245.

creation of Hungarian Gypsy music.<sup>33</sup> In his *Des Bohémiens*, Liszt regards the art of ornamentation as representative of Gypsy music, as he describes that “the habit of ornamentation visibly stamps Bohemian art.”<sup>34</sup> He further provides some details of ornamental patterns such as tremolos, scales, and arpeggios to elaborate a theme in the midst of his flowery, romanticized description:

The Gypsy artist is one who takes the theme of a song or dance just like the text of a discussion, as a poetic memorial, and who moves and flutters around this notion, of which he never loses sight, in the course of his improvisation. Most admired of all is one who lavishly enriches his own subject with runs, appoggiaturas, leaps, tremolos, chord stopping, diatonic and chromatic scales, and groups of notes in such a way that on account of this abundance of ornamentation the original idea is scarcely more apparent than the broadcloth in the sleeve of a brown cloak through the artistically worked out lacing and braiding which covers it with a dense and multicolored network.<sup>35</sup>

But then what makes the style of ornamentation specific to Hungarian Gypsy music? When we recall that Gypsy musicians had already absorbed and adapted the structural and harmonic elements of the central classical tradition in order to develop their own music, as discussed earlier, it is highly likely that their style of ornamentation has some overlap with the style they imported from the Western art music tradition. Sámuel Brassai, a Hungarian linguist and writer, claims that Gypsy musicians assimilated the style of ornamentation particularly associated with the European virtuoso tradition into the development of their instrumental music:

The entire instrumental music of Gypsy bands developed side by side with the exaggerated style of ornamentation adopted by the European virtuosos (instrumentalists and singers). . . . Their style of ornamentation is nothing but the gleanings of European virtuosity; its irregularities, which you do glorify, stem not from the independence of the idealized Gypsy character, but from the

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<sup>33</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 106–8.

<sup>34</sup> Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 302; in this statement, Liszt underscores the role of the first violin in improvisation as supported by the orchestra.

<sup>35</sup> Liszt, *Des bohémiens*, 69. Translation from Liszt, *The Gypsy in Music*, 307–8.

imperfections of botched imitations, which we can observe in every so-called “natural” musician, be he Gypsy or non-Gypsy.<sup>36</sup>

Yet at the same time a number of Hungarian music scholars have focused on how the art of ornamentation in the Hungarian Gypsy-band tradition is strikingly different from the usual sense of it in Western art music. To take one example, Frigyesi argues that in the “exuberant performance” of Gypsy musicians, the ornamentation eventually leads to the point where the existing tune becomes hard to recognize.<sup>37</sup> Bartók already made a similar description of a *rubato* style of Gypsy performance: “[The Gypsies] transformed [all the] melodies to some *parlando-rubato*, their excessive rubato playing crowded with overflowing and exuberant embellishments to the point where the songs became unrecognizable.”<sup>38</sup> Frigyesi further points out that the Gypsy musicians did not consider their embellishment simply as “ornaments around a note but as a statement in its own right.”<sup>39</sup> She believes that this type of ornamentation in the Hungarian Gypsy-band tradition makes it fundamentally different from the usual sense of it in Western art music. Frigyesi argues that this practice of ornamentation was probably well known throughout the nineteenth century; it was what the general public regarded as the most representative

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<sup>36</sup> Manga, *Hungarian Folk Songs*, 57. Brassai, *Magyar-vagy cigány-zene? Elmeftuttatás Liszt Ferencz “Czigányokról” irt könyve felett* (Hungarian or Gypsy music? A short essay about Ferencz Liszt’s book “On the Gypsies”), 48: the title translation comes from Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 87 and see her translation of the statement in part, 87, n. 148: “All the instrumental music of the Gypsy bands proceeded in parallel with the more strongly exaggerated fiorituras of the European virtuosos (instrument and vocal).” Brassai originally used this statement as a response to Liszt’s mistaken claim that the rhapsodic style of performance by Gypsy musicians stems from their “ancient musical heritage” in his discussion of rhapsody and epic. Hence Brassai’s criticism is more likely inclined to emphasize Liszt’s “Romanticized” or idealized manner of rendering Gypsy ornamentation.

<sup>37</sup> Frigyesi, *Béla Bartók*, 245.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Frigyesi originally used this statement to signal Bartók’s rejection of the generally conceived rhapsodic style of Gypsy musicians. See also Frigyesi’s “Belá Bartók and the Concept of Nation and Volk in Modern Hungary,” *Musical Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (1994): 255–87.

<sup>39</sup> Frigyesi, *Béla Bartók*, 246: at 245–48, she discusses the examples (Exx. 13a and 13b) cited above; also see Frigyesi, “Between Rubato and Rigid Rhythm: A Particular Type of Rhythmical Asymmetry as Reflected in Bartók’s Writings on Folk Music,” *Studia Musicologica* 24 (1982): 327–37, particularly at 328.

music of the Hungarians; and most of all, it became one of the inspirations for Liszt's Rhapsodies.<sup>40</sup>

To assess the descriptions above, *hallgató* style is inextricably bound to a *rubato* style of Gypsy performance more than to any structural elements or compositional style. It serves as a distinctive performance style of the Hungarian Gypsy band, characterized as having a lot of *rubato*, exuberant embellishments, metric freedom and irregularity, and virtuosic rendition. The art of ornamentation plays a crucial role in the *rubato* style of Gypsy-band performance, unfolding a constant and extensive process of elaborations, obscuring the original structure, and claiming a self-contained entity of its own.

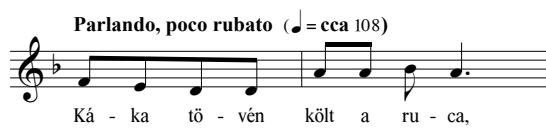
Throughout his Rhapsodies Liszt deploys a plethora of ornaments and embellishments. The richness, variety, and exuberance of those elaborations range from short ornamental figures to cadenza-like passages and free writing in a languid *rubato* style. The ornaments Liszt deployed are not unlike those found in Romantic virtuosic compositions. Yet through his deep interest in Gypsy-band styles, Liszt would have acknowledged and attempted to approximate certain stylistic characteristics unique to the *rubato* style and ornamentation of Gypsy performance. Among other things the following discussions focus on how Liszt attempts to portray the improvising cimbalom player in *hallgató* style and how he imbues the passages with distinctive types of ornaments idiomatic to the instrument. By continuing our discussion about Liszt's renderings of cimbalom playing, this investigation helps shed light on his scrupulous approach to the instrument and his own pianistic solutions in response.

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<sup>40</sup> Frigyesi, *Béla Bartók*, 245.



To illuminate the process of the Gypsy *rubato*-style, it is useful to identify the original tune to demonstrate how it unfolds in the style. Example 9.12a is an excerpt from the first phrase of a popular Hungarian song from around 1840, *Káka tövén költ a ruca* (“In the rushes, that’s the duck’s home”), which Sárosi identifies as the source tune for the opening of Liszt’s eighth Rhapsody, as shown in Example 9.12b; the circled notes comprise the original tune transposed.<sup>41</sup>



<sup>41</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 114–15, identifies not only the source tune for the opening of Rhapsody No. 3 but also two more source tunes from popular Hungarian songs that were used in the same piece. For further information of sources tunes for Liszt’s Rhapsodies, see Major, “Liszt Ferenc rapszódiai” [Ferenc Liszt’s rhapsodies].

The way the existing tune is rendered in Liszt's version has an unmistakable parallel with what we already have observed in the excerpts from Pressel's article of 1852 and Allaga's method book. I quote those examples again here—Examples 9.13a–b (previously Examples 8.6a–b from Pressel's article) and Example 9.14 (previously Example 8.7 from Allaga's book)—to demonstrate how an imaginary cimbalom player would render an existing tune in a slow rhapsodic-style section; and how he would use various types of ornaments and idioms to embellish the tune.

Example 9.13a. Existing tune (“Tree and root are torn, I and dear / my love are separated!”)

**Lassu (= Adagio.) Klagend.**

**Gesang.**

Baum und Wur-zel sind zer-ri-sen,  
u. f. to.  
Ich und Lieb-chen sind ge-trennt!

Example 9.13b. “Instrumental embellishment” of the tune

The musical score for Example 9.13b consists of four staves. The first staff is marked "Lassù." and "ritard. & tempo. Tremolo Solo". The second staff is marked "(Cymbal.)". The third staff is also marked "(Cymbal.)". The fourth staff is marked "u. f. to." and features a large, sweeping melodic line with a fermata. The music is written in a single system with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature.

Example 9.14. Allaga, *Cimbalom iskola*, 73

The musical score for Example 9.14 consists of two staves. The first staff is marked "Andante" and "f". The second staff is marked "p". The music is written in a single system with a key signature of one flat and a 2/4 time signature. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, ties, and dynamic markings.

By juxtaposing Liszt’s rendering (Example 9.12b) with those above (Example 9.13b and Example 9.14), several similarities are immediately recognizable: the slow tempo, the profuse ornaments including the characteristic arpeggios, and the frequent use of *fermatas*, conveying a sense of the *rubato*-style performance. Comparing Liszt’s

version with the excerpt from Allaga's method book (Example 9.14), both examples share the general tendency of the ornaments to ascend, the initial broken arpeggios with an emphasis on *forte*, the arpeggios developing into a melodic turn typical of a cimbalom gesture, and the detailed dynamic markings that help emulate the increase and decrease in volume and intensity customary of cimbalom playing.

One might argue that without knowledge of the cimbalom techniques in particular and Hungarian Gypsy style in general, the beginning of Liszt's Rhapsody No. 8 (Example 9.12b) immediately gives the impression of an improvisatory character in a free rhythm and meter under the designation *Lento a capriccio*. The music enters an eighth note late on scale degree five of F# minor, as if intruding on what has already happened and thus lending a sense of ambiguity and spontaneity from the outset. The initial note, as emphasized by *mesto* (melancholy) and a *fermata*, suspends the unsettling moment, gradually unfolding its arpeggio patterns. The fermatas, in particular, serve as effective cessations of the musical course, making the passage torpid. These characteristics are not uncommon in the passages associated with a free, fantasy style in his piano compositions.

In addition, the excerpt from Example 9.12b may also demonstrate Liszt's own improvisatory practice in his performance and compositional process. His improvisatory skills actually formed an important part of his early reputation.<sup>42</sup> His solo recitals

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<sup>42</sup> For the anecdotes in his early years, see the report of Liszt's improvisation in his 1822 concert in Vienna: Walker, *Franz Liszt*, I, 78; the report of Liszt's improvisation in 1825 in Vienna by the *Manchester Gazette*: William Wright, "Liszt in Manchester," *Journal of the American Liszt Society* 41 (1997): 10. Liszt was not always successful in his improvisations. For an unsatisfactory rendering, see the improvisation in his "farewell" concert of 13 April 1823 in *Der Sammler* [Vienna], 29 April 1823; Saffle, "Liszt Research Since 1936: A Bibliographic Survey," *Acta musicologica* 58 (1986): 279; "Czerny and the Keyboard Fantasy, Traditions, Innovations, Legacy," in *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity: Reassessing Carl Czerny*, ed. David Gramit (Rochester: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 218.

culminated in his celebrated improvisations on themes suggested by the audience.<sup>43</sup> In his Pest recitals during his 1839–40 and 1846 tours of Hungary, for instance, Liszt improvised on tunes from the popular Hungarian repertoire favored by the audience.<sup>44</sup> By basing their improvisations on themes customarily given by the audience, the traveling virtuoso pianists displayed not only their prowess in extemporization but also their close bond with an audience familiar with the tunes.<sup>45</sup> Extending his improvisation practice to the opening of Rhapsody No. 8 (Example 9.12b), although the fragment of the popular Hungarian song used in the opening is not given such a brilliant climax here, the composer presumably selected a tune related to the audience, displayed his improvisation prowess to elaborate the tune, and communicated with his audience through his rendering.

Liszt's improvisation is also inextricably bound up with his compositional process. He often deployed some improvisatory modules and incorporated them into his ongoing process of working out on the keyboard. David Trippett's studies demonstrate that repetition is one of the patterns, which helps Liszt play for time in his improvisation

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<sup>43</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 138–39; Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, 44–45.

<sup>44</sup> Gooley, *The Virtuoso Liszt*, 138–39, accounts for the process of choosing tunes for improvisation in Liszt's final concert of 1839–40 season as well as the reception of the selected tunes in relation to the conflict between civic Hungarian and Magyar national conceptions prevalent in Pest at the time.

<sup>45</sup> For the interaction between improvisation and audience in nineteenth-century concerts, see Janet Ritterman, "Piano Music and the Public Concert 1800–1850," in *The Cambridge Companion to Chopin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), ed. Jim Samson, 11–31, at 25–26; Halina Goldberg, *Music in Chopin's Warsaw* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 197, 200; Goldberg, "'Remembering that tale of grief': The Prophetic Voice in Chopin's Music," in *The Age of Chopin: Interdisciplinary Inquiries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), ed. Halina Goldberg, 54–92, at 63–74. In the case of Liszt, see Gooley, *Virtuoso Liszt*, 138–39; Hamilton, *After the Golden Age*, 44–45 as cited above.

easily through a literal repeat and achieve metrical balance.<sup>46</sup> The recitative-like passage is also one of the ubiquitous devices in improvisation, providing a lyrical moment before launching into another section without preparation.<sup>47</sup> The recitative style can be also a harbinger of the “speaking style” in the keyboard fantasia tradition, particularly associated with the legacy of Carl Czerny and Beethoven, which had a profound impact on Liszt.<sup>48</sup> Extrapolated from these improvisatory modules, Example 9.12b illustrates how the virtuoso improviser-composer renders the passage in a recitative style, restating it to gain time, creating a balanced phrase structure, and ultimately expanding the pianistic sonority to the realm of “speaking.”

The general characteristics associated with improvisatory practice, however, become distinctive if we consider certain traits of the *rubato* style practiced by Hungarian Gypsy musicians and Liszt’s response to them, including *hallgató* style and ornamentation. What is important for the current discussion is how the role of the cimbalom interacts in the process of the *rubato* style. The correspondences between Liszt’s rendering and those from Pressel’s article and Allaga’s method book have already helped to show his careful attention to the distinctive techniques of the imaginary

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<sup>46</sup> Trippett, “*Après une lecture de Liszt*,” 78. For another reference to piano improvisation in a compositional process, see John Rink, “Chopin and Schenker: Improvisation and Musical Structure,” *Chopin Studies* 3 (1990), 219–31.

<sup>47</sup> Trippett, “*Après une lecture de Liszt*,” 78.

<sup>48</sup> Czerny as both the student of Beethoven and the teacher of Liszt stands between these two composers in relation to keyboard improvisation practice. For Czerny, the concept of fantasia is inextricably linked to Beethoven’s practice, which had continued the earlier meaning of fantasia as being improvised, and having formal freedom, free modulations, and varied affects, as illustrated in his Fantasy, Op. 77, or even the fantasy-related sonatas such as Op. 27 no. 2 in E-flat major, the Sonata “*quasi una fantasia*.” Czerny’s method for piano improvisation employs the word “fantasieren” in the title of his *Systematische Anleitung zum Fantasieren auf dem Pianoforte, Opus 200* (1836); trans. and ed. Alice L. Mitchell (New York & London: Longman, 1983). For discussion of the fantasy as delineated by Koch and C. P. E. Bach and its relation to Beethoven’s E-flat major Sonata, see Jones, *Beethoven: The “Moonlight” and Other Sonatas*, 58; also for Beethoven’s legato pianism and speaking style, see George Barth, “Inflection: The ‘Speaking Style’ Transformed,” in the author’s book *The Pianist as Orator; Beethoven and the Transformation of Keyboard Style* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), 38–131, at 38–47.

cimbalom player's improvisation in a slow rhapsodic style. The imaginary player improvises a tune in a virtuosic manner around the basic skeleton of the melody by using distinctive types of figurations idiomatic of the cimbalom, including resonant arpeggiated chords, a turning melodic contour, fast runs up and down the scale, delicate trills, and profuse ornaments mostly ascending.

More conspicuously, in his version of Example 9.12b, Liszt carefully wrote down non-pianistic repetition on a single note in the midst of the fantasy-like passage. This single-note reiteration, as discussed above, may be the recitative, or “speaking,” style of writing integral to the piano improvisation that is in turn written down in the score.<sup>49</sup> Yet, through the lens of Hungarian Gypsy-music idioms, it immediately reminds us of the single-note hammering of the cimbalom, as observed earlier in one of the examples of Allaga's methods books (Examples 8.2b and 8.4) as well as Liszt's renderings (Examples 9.7–9.9). As for the repeated-note passage of Example 9.12b, Sárosi suggests attributing it to the violinist's playing: in his interpretation, the entire passage begins with the sonorous arpeggios that evoke the cimbalom player, leading to the first violin and his or her short runs.<sup>50</sup> It is true to a certain degree that the passage could portray the interaction between the cimbalom player and the violinist. Yet, as already observed in the example of cimbalom repetition on a single note, Liszt's deliberate choice of non-pianistic repetition looks and sounds like the cimbalom hammering. Just as he had done in his emulation of the cimbalom hammering, Liszt meticulously inscribes single-note

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<sup>49</sup> One of the representative examples is the extensive recitative passage from the third movement of Beethoven's A♭-major Sonata, Op. 110.

<sup>50</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 115.

repetition and provides detailed *crescendos* and *fermatas*, offering a nuanced articulation of cimbalom playing.

The marking *Lento a capriccio* in Example 9.12b continues to show Liszt's use of the designation reserved for a specific passage throughout his Rhapsodies.

Recalling his marking *a capriccio* for the cimbalom tremolos (Examples 9.1 and 9.2), in this example he would have also found the *capriccio* tradition associated with fantasia and improvisation useful for approximating *hallgató* style effectively. Liszt's reworkings in this instance thus demonstrate how acutely he saw the potential parallels between the two disparate traditions—the *capriccio* associations from Romantic virtuoso and keyboard practice on the one hand and the *hallgató* style from distinctively Hungarian Gypsy-music practice on the other hand—and how convincingly he assimilates the two different traditions into his own piano version. The result of his integration is to offer both familiarity and freshness by deploying the term accustomed to the performers and audiences of his time and engaging with the long-standing virtuoso tradition, yet turning it to his own purpose to faithfully capture certain styles of Gypsy-band music, particularly the cimbalom improvisation.

The issue of gauging the process of cimbalom improvisation is challenging. The sources of Gypsy improvisation in a larger context are murky, not fully explained or specific enough. Although the discussion of Gypsy improvisation is not part of this study, it is relevant to propose an approach to Liszt's responses to Gypsy improvisation through one of his renderings of cimbalom playing. Liszt's references to Gypsy improvisation, first of all, can be understood largely in two respects: in the context of historical performance; and in his response to the improvising Gypsy players with his two



hands on one keyboard. For the former, despite the lack of written musical sources, his enthusiastic description of improvising Gypsy players, his exposure to and interaction with Gypsy bands, and existing anecdotes about Gypsy-band performance all suggest that Liszt's modeling of improvisatory writing throughout his Rhapsodies is indebted in part to the styles and practices of improvisation cultivated by a few outstanding Gypsy musicians.<sup>51</sup>

The improvisation theory discussed in the literature can also help us to understand Gypsy improvisation in a broader sense.<sup>52</sup> One of the theoretical approaches to improvisation tends to emphasize certain features. According to Ali Jihad Racy, for example, these features include "intuitiveness," "creativity," "personalization (individualization)," "balance between the familiar and the novel," and "direct contact with the audience."<sup>53</sup> As for the field of piano improvisation, in his discussion of Chopin's improvisation John Rink has approached the subject analytically by using a Schenkerian graphing of different structural levels of Chopin's Polonaise Fantaisie, Op. 61, setting out particular traits of the composer's style that reflect the improvisation

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<sup>51</sup> For Liszt's writing, see his *Des bohémiens*, 69; *The Gipsy in Music*, 302–3, 306–8. He was enthused about the extraordinary skills of Gypsy musicians who were able to improvise on any tune; and particularly regarded the art of ornamentation as representative of Gypsy music, providing some details of ornamental patterns such as tremolos, scales, and arpeggios to elaborate a theme against the background of his flowery, romanticized description; *The Gypsy in Music*, 306–8. For Liszt's interaction with Gypsy bands and anecdotes about Gypsy-band playing, see Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 66–140 and discussed in Ch. 8.

<sup>52</sup> Improvisation theory is approached from a variety of directions, including aesthetics and critical theory, the psychological aspect, and ethnomusicological approaches. See studies including Bruno Nettl, *In the Course of Performance: Studies in the World of Musical Improvisation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) and George Lewis, "Critical Responses to Theorizing Improvisation (Musically)," *Music Theory Online* 19, no. 2 (June 2013): 1–6, respectively. For Gypsy-band improvisation in a Romanticized version, see Michael Beckerman, "Music: Pushing Gypsiness, Roma or Otherwise," *New York Times*, 1 April 2001, which proposes the formula, I+V=E (I stands for improvisation, V for virtuosity, and E for emotions or expressiveness); Malvinni, *The Gypsy Caravan*, 43–62; and Piotrowska, "Expressing the Inexpressible."

<sup>53</sup> Ali Jihad Rach, "The Many Faces of Improvisation: The Arab Taqasim as a Musical Symbol," *Ethnomusicology* 44, no. 2 (Spring–Summer, 2000): 302–20, at 304–7.

tradition.<sup>54</sup> These approaches to improvisation theory can be applied to the improvisation of Hungarian Gypsy players, but it is not central to how a composer–pianist combines the imagined players of a Gypsy band onto one keyboard.

It is important to note that what Liszt attempted was not to reproduce the authentic nature of the practice but to approximate what he believed and imagined to be real Gypsy improvisation in his own virtuosic pianistic terms, and thus considering his own improvisation practice as a significant constituent of his rendering of Gypsy improvisation. He also attempted to credit the improvising Gypsy virtuosos with full artistic value by conjuring up the nature and spirit of the practice in his written compositions, ultimately elevating the status of the improvising Gypsy virtuosos to the level of artists.<sup>55</sup> What we have assessed from Example 9.12b is one facet of cimbalom improvisation in a Gypsy-band performance, taking into account Liszt’s improvisation practice on the one hand, and his responses to certain traits of the imaginary cimbalom player’s extempore performance on the other hand.

Liszt’s rendering of a tune in the *rubato* style of Gypsy performance invites consideration of the broader issue of his borrowing method in his Rhapsodies. Sárosi has made a compelling argument that Liszt’s version of the instrumental fantasy has “no respect for its original character” but instead represents his faithful attempts to imitate the performance of a Gypsy ensemble.<sup>56</sup> This suggests that the way Liszt arranges the tunes becomes less significant than his attempts to capture the way Gypsy-band musicians

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<sup>54</sup> Rink, “Chopin and Schenker,” 219. At the same time Rink has to recognize that it is challenging to estimate accurately the influence improvisation had on Chopin’s music at a structural level.

<sup>55</sup> For the meaning of Liszt’s search for Gypsy improvisation, see Gooley’s discussion of the polarized sides of the evaluation of the virtuosity, improvisation, and Gypsy improvisation in his “The Battle Against Virtuosity,” in *Franz Liszt and His World*, 89. For further discussions, see Deavile, “The Making of a Myth: Liszt, the Press, and Virtuosity,” in *New Light on Liszt and His Music*, 188–89.

<sup>56</sup> Sárosi, *Gypsy Music*, 115.

arranged tunes in their performances. In the critical comments of the *Neue Liszt Ausgabe* (1972–73), Gárdonyi and Szelényi also note that the source tunes of Liszt’s rhapsodies are not based on his own invention; for this reason these pieces are closer to his opera and song paraphrases. Yet at the same time, the editors also emphasize that in contrast with his paraphrases in free style, Liszt attempted in his Rhapsodies I–XV “to reproduce in a recognizable form the style of playing of Hungarian popular Gypsy bands.”<sup>57</sup> Liszt was interested less in his renowned technique of paraphrase or a set of variations as cultivated in his opera fantasies than in rendering the existing tune in *hallgató* style to approximate a live performance of the Gypsy band. Hooker also argues that what makes Liszt’s “Hungarian-style pieces”—including his Rhapsodies—distinguishable from his other works is neither the Hungarian origin of the tunes nor his use of improvisation to develop them but “his modeling of his improvisation at least in part on the style of other performers—the Gypsy virtuosi of Hungary, the performers that brought Hungary’s national music to life.”<sup>58</sup>

The scholarly views, above all, offer guidance to understanding Liszt’s rendering of *hallgató* style in the opening of his Rhapsody No. 8 (Example 9.12b), reorienting our focus toward the significance of the performance style associated with Gypsy improvisation. In Liszt’s rendering, most parts of the melody are replaced by ornaments in a constant process of improvisation, in which the recognition and identification of the original tune becomes less important than the distinctive Hungarian-Gypsy style of the embellishments surrounding the melodic notes. Moreover, the structural significance of the melody becomes less highlighted than the performing style of the ornaments deployed

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<sup>57</sup> *Ungarische Rhapsodien* I and II, eds. Gárdonyi and Szelényi, x.

<sup>58</sup> Hooker, *Redefining Hungarian Music*, 81–82.

by improvising Gypsy musicians. Although there are many aspects to help elucidate the way Gypsy musicians render a tune and develop it with their own ornamentation, the investigation of the opening of Liszt's eighth Rhapsody offers a particular layer of understanding of how the composer made conscious efforts to reproduce the distinctive types of ornaments, idioms, and techniques of cimbalom playing, successfully capturing the image of the improvising cimbalom player. The way he renders the original tune in *hallgató* style is different from the way the existing tune is elaborated in a setting of variations or a fantasy. Behind the ostensibly free writing, which is considered to show Liszt's liberalness throughout his Rhapsodies, lies his conscientious approach to capturing on the piano a particular type of cimbalom playing.

## **Conclusion**

Common to Liszt's reworkings of cimbalom playing is that his novelty on the surface stems from his scrupulousness toward the instrument being modeled. One of the representative examples is his unusual division of trills and tremolos in the alternation of the hands; the impulse behind this is his attentive approach to the movement of two hammers on the cimbalom. Similarly, behind his experiment with conventional keyboard layout lies his deep interest in the integrity of the cimbalom, as illustrated in his extensive tremolo passages that give visual and aural prominence to the shimmering sound of the instrument. On several occasions his novelty in bravura filigree turns out to be not just a showcase but his meticulousness in emulating a particular type of playing, as shown in his specific 4-3-2-1 fingering, which aptly articulates cimbalom-playing being reliant on a consistent pattern and the rapid alternation of the hands. His novelty also makes the

unfamiliar come to the forefront, as he carefully uses non-pianistic repetition on a single note, which in turn reflects his attempt to capture cimbalom hammering on one note, making it conspicuous in the midst of pianistic flourishes. His non-pianistic repetition in faster sections, on the other hand, creates percussive hammering; moreover, it conveys the cimbalom player's dual rhythmic and melodic capacity at the same time. Liszt's creativity also appears when the two disparate layers of texture are superimposed on top of each other, which look less pianistic but appropriate for cimbalom playing and its interaction with the violin, as he renders the resonating tremolos of the cimbalom and the pizzicato melody of the violin simultaneously.

In relation to his reworkings in his orchestral arrangements of Part I and II, his renderings of cimbalom-playing in his Rhapsodies of Part III continue the dynamic of faithfulness and creativity as two sides of the same coin and at the same time reinvigorate this dynamic in a completely different realm of music. If many instances of his orchestral arrangements reveal his faithfulness to his models on the surface and his concealed creativity, his reworkings of cimbalom-playing immediately convey his overt novelty in layout, texture, and sound yet his scrupulous rendering of the models underneath. By concentrating on the fidelity-creativity dynamic as an overarching aesthetic theme, the Conclusion that follows synthesizes what we have observed in the musical analyses of Parts I–III. It addresses several recurring patterns of techniques in Liszt's reworkings and the underlying aesthetics of them in the repertoire under study.

## Conclusion

### Recurring Techniques and Aesthetics

Liszt treated his models with the utmost care. His endeavors to capture the essence of these models attest to his genuine admiration for them. His conscientious and inventive approach to rendering them on the keyboard testifies to his integrity and his indisputable mastery of the piano. By exploring every possible resource available on the piano, he minimized the ostensible disadvantages of the piano, ensuring the most faithful rendering of the model. His reworkings represent the blurring of boundaries between reference and digression, composition and performance, and faithful reproduction and creative artistry. His compositional focus on the texture, sound, and timbre of instruments, in particular, illustrates his combination of detailed attention to the model instruments and his imaginative reconstruction of them. Liszt as a virtuoso arranger stands between the model and the audience for his recreation, projecting his faithful observance on the one hand and turning his interpretation into spectacle on the other hand, or telescoping both into an experience that draws attention.

This study has investigated Liszt's transferral and reworking methods in arranging orchestral music, at the same time expanding the scope of his reworkings to his use of Gypsy-band idioms focused on cimbalom playing. Chapters 1–5 in Part I provided detailed investigations of Liszt's arrangements of orchestral music for solo piano, specifically designated as "*partitions*" by the composer himself. In Chapter 1, we assessed the notion of *partition* through Liszt's own writing and his preface to his set of Beethoven's symphonies. As a new approach to piano arrangement that Liszt claimed to

have established, the *partition* advocates his fidelity to the original, as if treating the original as a “sacred text,” underscoring a scrupulous rendering of the original down to the smallest detail. Yet the concept of *partition* is not straightforward. It situates his exceptional fidelity in the forefront of his transferral methods, yet behind the fidelity lie his creative reworkings that provide convincing solutions to problems in transferring the music to the new medium. Concurrently, many of his divergences from the original, contradictory to the overall faithfulness of the *partition*, stem from his deep understanding of the original sounds and effects. The dynamic of fidelity and creativity as a significant aesthetic thus arises in the very concept of *partition*.

Liszt’s meticulous notation discussed as part of Chapter 1 bolsters the interaction of fidelity and creativity. His rich, detailed, and varied notational devices show his attentive approach to the detail of the original, particularly individual instruments. At the same time his scrupulousness motivates him to offer his interpretations of nuances, dynamics, and articulations of the instruments in his own pianistic terms. His notation also represents how he effectively made such devices compensate for the limitations of the keyboard, including the lack of instrumental timbres, as well as how he required pianists to observe his specific instrumental cues and directions and render them in a nuanced manner, evoking the individual instruments of the orchestra.

Chapters 2 through 5 investigated Liszt’s *partitions* of orchestral music by Beethoven, Berlioz, Rossini, and Weber. His *partitions* are related to one other under the notion of *partition*, adhering to the structure and details of the original, yet at the same time distinguishable from each other in some of the individual elements in his reworkings. Chapters 2 and 3 thus discussed Liszt’s *partitions* of music by Beethoven

and Berlioz, “sacred texts,” as the summit of his faithfulness. Chapters 4 and 5 then examined his *partitions* of overtures by Rossini and Weber, those of “reassessing,” focusing on the elements that blur the notion of *partition*, including fantasy-like elements in the former and prominent simplification in the latter. The contemporary assessment of Liszt’s renderings also helped shape this different approach to his *partitions*. The most effective contrast is that the critics regarded his Beethoven *partitions* as the consummation of fidelity, meticulousness, and thus difficulty and exclusivity, whereas his Rossini *partition* drew the audience’s attention more to his improvisation on the music than his faithfulness, imparting a different style of free writing to the *partition*, based in part on the tradition of improvisation associated with Italian opera.

Chapters 6 and 7 in Part II focused on to Liszt’s two-piano arrangements of his own orchestral music during the Weimar years. His conscientious approach to his two-piano arrangements suggests that the arrangements are *Partitur*-type renderings, continuing what he had done before in his *partitions*, yet moving in a new direction with the new medium of two pianos. Chapter 6 raised some problems in how current scholarship has approached the two-piano and four-hand arrangements. The problems lie mainly in the reiterated generic purposes such as dissemination, promotion, and education, undermining the arranger’s individuality and his shrewd sense of which reworking techniques to use for different mediums. Despite the scant attention that has been paid to Liszt’s two-piano arrangements by scholars, this chapter helped establish their distinctive position in the development of the medium during the second half of the century, focusing on their relatively large quantity, meticulous approach, and virtuosic characteristics, as well as their professional reception. In Chapter 7, musical analyses



demonstrated how fully Liszt was aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the resources available on two pianos, and how judiciously he used them with respect to the distribution, layout, and interaction between the pianos. The musical examples of Liszt's reworkings revealed both the continuity with what he had done in his earlier orchestral arrangements and the freshness of what he introduced into his two-piano settings, reinvigorating the dynamics of fidelity and creativity for the new medium.

Chapters 8 and 9 in Part III transported us to the completely different realm of Liszt's reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-band music in his Rhapsodies, focusing on his renderings of cimbalom playing. Chapter 6 provided significant contextual dimensions to understand Gypsy-band musicians as the fulcrum of "folk" and "art." Their music was perceived in the "folk" category of attributes, including musical illiteracy, oral transmission, non-authored works, and spontaneous improvisation. Yet music by the renowned Gypsy bands around 1790 had already assimilated the instrumentation, texture, and harmony of the European classical tradition. In this context, the cimbalom had also already appeared as part of the basso continuo in the classical tradition, while still creating a distinctively Hungarian Gypsy-music sound. The Gypsy-band music that reveals the coalescence of "folk" and "art" was what Liszt drew on throughout his life. Chapter 8 also discussed Liszt's relationships with the cimbalom through his writing on the instrument, his direct encounters with Gypsy bands and cimbalom players, and his continuous acquaintance with cimbalom virtuosos, makers, and pedagogues. Most of all, this chapter introduced several essential techniques idiomatic to the instrument: trills and tremolos, single-note hammering, hand-over-hand repeating patterns, and ornaments.

These techniques helped to understand Liszt's references to the multifaceted aspects of cimbalom playing discussed in Chapter 9.

Throughout Liszt's orchestral arrangements (Part I and II) and Rhapsodies (Part III), the musical analyses focused on his specific compositional techniques in his rendering of instrumental music. His reworking process demonstrates how scrupulously he approached the essence of the model, how effectively he provided solutions to problems in rendering the sounds and effects of the modeled instruments, and how individually he reinvigorated the borrowed material in his own pianistic terms. Despite the completely different source material in his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies, his reworking methods reveal that certain types of compositional techniques and aesthetics underlying them recur throughout. To conclude this study, the following discussions synthesize musical analyses by focusing on these recurring techniques and aesthetics Liszt deployed across Parts I–III. This synthesis permits comparison and contrast among different realms of music considered in this study, ultimately converging on the recurring theme that fidelity and creativity are interdependent throughout Liszt's reworkings.

### **(1) Orchestral Concept of Sound**

#### *Focus on individual instruments*

Liszt's reworking methods across his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies reveal his deep interest in the distinctive sounds and effects of individual instruments. The immediately recognizable element is his detailed cues for instruments. The impulse behind these cues, whether through profuse use of instrumental cues in his orchestral

arrangements or his specific designation of “*quasi zimbalo(n)*” in his Rhapsodies, is his faith that the piano is capable of producing the sounds of the instruments. The carefully inscribed cues represent his scrupulousness toward detail as well as his aspiration for pianists to be aware of the original instruments and render them in a nuanced manner with keyboard touch and articulation.

Liszt approaches the individual instruments attentively and renders them effectively in his pianistic terms. For example, in his rendering of the prominent timpani rolls in his Rossini *partition* (Example 4.5b), the chromatic scales he deploys are a distinctively pianistic solution to the agitated effect of the timpani. At the same time, his rendering reflects his detailed approach to the rise and fall of the rolls in his *crescendo* and *decrescendo* markings. More importantly, he is faithful to the harmonic content of the timpani rolls, preserving the implied bass yet turning the rolls into effective pianistic figurations in the rumbling scales. His similar treatment of the timpani roll is also found in his rendering of the Romans theme in his two-piano arrangement of *Hunnenschlacht* (Example 7.7b). He uses the chromatic timpani roll to evoke the ghostly mood that threatens the Romans, ultimately suggesting his re-reading of his own symphonic poem.

In his Rhapsodies, Liszt’s renderings of cimbalom playing illustrate the panoply of the instrument’s unique techniques and effects. For instance, the shimmering sound of the cimbalom unfolds through tremolos; and the distinctive single-note hammering appears in a slow tempo, or for percussive effect in a fast tempo. Just as he evoked that timpani players would render their rolls in as rise-and-fall pattern in his Rossini *partition*, he emulated such characteristics of cimbalom playing as gradual acceleration and deceleration, increase and decrease in intensity, and *crescendo* and *decrescendo*.

Tremolos served as one of the important motivations for Liszt's search for effective pianistic solutions. The emulation of tremolos is not unusual in piano arrangements, but Liszt's approach to string tremolos invites comparison with his emulation of cimbalom tremolos in his Rhapsodies and helps provide a new layer of meaning to the conventional adaptations of tremolos.

Throughout his orchestral arrangements, Liszt transforms string tremolos into virtuosic keyboard idioms. In contrast, the cimbalom tremolos in his Rhapsodies avoid the melody-accompaniment scheme typical of keyboard texture to concentrate on the shimmering sonority in free-style writing. In addition, he deploys a novel notation for cimbalom tremolos by dividing the hands in emulation of the cimbalom's hammers, evoking the distinctive physical and visual effect of playing the instrument. His reworking thus adheres to the visual, aural, and physical characteristics of the instrument's playing.

Liszt's faithful approach to each type of tremolo inspires his creative solutions. For string tremolos, he explores various substitutions, constantly shifting them and thus effectively sustaining interest. On occasion he radically transforms string tremolos into virtuosic figurations, suggesting his enrichment of orchestra sonority and offering his reinterpretation in pianistic terms. For his renderings of cimbalom tremolos, his conscientious attitude toward the instrument's playing motivates him to deploy a figuration, layout, and texture unusual for the keyboard. The wide-ranging tremolos sound less pianistic than cimbalom-like; the layout of the divided hands for the tremolos or trills is also untypical of pianistic idioms, evoking the movement of hammers on the

cimbalom; and the texture is not framed in a conventional keyboard manner but designed to focus on the sonority and timbre of the cimbalom.

Liszt's renderings of tremolos for both strings and cimbalom share several functions. They fill out pauses in the melodic part, provide harmonic support during long-held notes, and compensate for the rapid decay of the tone on the keyboard, ultimately sustaining or increasing the interest and intensity of the sound of the model instruments. At the same time, the significant differences between the two types of tremolos illustrate his different responses to the two models. If Liszt's faithfulness toward string tremolos led him to explore virtuosic keyboard idioms, the same attitude toward cimbalom tremolos frequently thwarts the expectation of the keyboard idioms. What is in common, nevertheless, is his conscientious attitude toward each of the models and his inventive search for new ways of translating their sounds and effects to the piano.

#### *Timbral interplay on the keyboard*

In an oft-quoted letter to Adolph Pietet in 1837, Liszt expressed his aspiration:

my firm wish is not to abandon study and development of the piano until I have done everything possible, or at least everything that it is possible for me to do today. . . . In the span of its seven octaves it embraces the range of an orchestra; and the ten fingers of one man suffice to render the harmonies produced by the concourse of more than a hundred instruments playing together.<sup>1</sup>

Liszt's statement cited above represents his orchestral concept of sound in his creation of massive sound as equivalent of orchestral *tutti*; compare the frequent reports by

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<sup>1</sup> *Revue et gazette musicale*, 11 February 1838 (the letter was written in 1837), cited in Williams, *Portrait*, 92–93; a different translation in Liszt, *An Artist's Journey*, 45. Liszt's views of the piano as equivalent to the orchestra are also well documented through anecdotes of his reputation as a sight-reader, his teaching, and most of all, his virtuosic performing styles.

contemporary witnesses that his playing gave the illusion of a hundred instruments.<sup>2</sup>

Aside from the massive *tutti* effect, however, the statement also illustrates his aspiration to convey the timbral interplay of variegated instruments with his ten fingers.

Many instances of Liszt's renderings in his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies demonstrate how he saw the potential of the pianist's ten fingers as analogous to the multiple instruments of the orchestra or different instruments of Gypsy band such as the violin and the cimbalom. To take one example from the Rhapsodies (Example 9.10a), Liszt provides a distinctive texture that superimposes the two different layers of sounds and articulations, evoking the imaginary violinist and cimbalom player, respectively. The right hand plays the role of the violinist, who plays an articulated melody *staccato spiccato*, whereas the left hand provides the resonating tremolos of the cimbalom. Liszt preserves the independence of the sounds, distinguishing them through different figuration, articulation, and performance direction. The two layers of sounds are contradictory pianistically, but create a unique coalescence of the sounds of the Gypsy-band instruments. His rendering indeed lends the image of his ten fingers capturing the collaboration of the cimbalom player and violinist.

In his orchestral arrangements, in the instances that evoke three- or four-hand texture and technique, Liszt often used three-stave notation effectively to stratify the disparate layers of the model's textures and multiply different articulations of the instruments in utmost detail. As observed in an example from the Berlioz *partitions*

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<sup>2</sup> Liszt's views of the piano as equivalent to the orchestra are also well documented through anecdotes of his reputation as a sight-reader, his teaching, and most of all, his virtuosic performing styles. For Liszt's sight-reading skills, Williams, *Portrait*, 292, 425, 454–55, 485; Derek Watson, *Liszt* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 139; also cited in Hughes, "Franz Liszt: Symphonist of the Keyboard," *Music Review* 55, no. 1 (February 1994), 4–5. For his teaching, Mach, *Liszt Studies*, ix–xxvi, particularly, the episode of his soirée on 19 January 1832, xiii. For his performances, countless anecdotes, from which Gooley provided ample evidence in his *The Virtuoso Liszt*, particularly 35–37.

(Example 3.1), his rendering immediately gives the impression of four-hand technique in the standard two-stave notation. He carefully delineates four different layers of instruments, each with its own detailed articulation and dynamic; the melody in violin I is interwoven with two different countermelodies in violin II and woodwinds, respectively, as well as the accompaniment in the basses. All the fingers are required to manage contrasting types of articulation, texture, and figuration, producing a timbral interplay of different groups of instruments simultaneously on the keyboard.

Throughout his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies, Liszt's orchestral concept of sound is evident in his focus on the texture, sound, and timbre of instruments, more than any structural elements such as melody and harmony. He aspired to produce on the keyboard all the essentials of instruments, successfully merging his pianistic prowess with his orchestral concept and setting the piano on an equal footing with the orchestra, Gypsy ensemble, or individual instruments.

## **(2) Reinvigoration of Virtuoso Keyboard Techniques**

The examples excerpted from Liszt's orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies expose the range of his virtuosic compositional and performance styles. As we observed earlier in relation to the accounts of his performances, both his *partitions* and Rhapsodies served as staples of his concerts, dazzling the audiences of the time. His two-piano arrangements also frequently appeared in concerts of his associates. It is thus not surprising that Liszt often draws on his own "transcendental" techniques throughout his reworkings.

The meaning of the virtuosic techniques becomes reinvigorated in his reworkings. He uses them as convincing solutions to emulating orchestral effects or the distinctive

style of cimbalom playing. In his orchestral arrangements, he often transforms orchestral accompaniment patterns into novel bravura and formidable pianistic figurations and techniques, including cascades of octaves played by alternating hands, rapid playing of chords, rapid alternation of the two hands, large skips across the keyboard, and wide arpeggios that sweep the entire range of the keyboard. These devices help sustain the tension and interest of the orchestral texture and rhythm, heighten the building-up process, and intensify a dramatic accompaniment intrinsic to the original (Beethoven *partitions*, Examples 2.11–2.12; Berlioz, Example 3.10–3.11).

Liszt's virtuosic figurations also effectively capture the different guises of the theme in correspondingly different instrumentation, texture, and character. For instance, he revitalizes the accompaniment to the *Franc-Juges* theme in various virtuosic keyboard idioms yet never loses sight of the character of each appearance of the theme (Berlioz *partitions*, Examples 3.6–3.10). Moreover, Liszt often provides completely different accompaniments while preserving the original pitch content in his own virtuosic styles. For example, as already mentioned, in the Rossini *partition*, the indelible chromatic scales of the timpani rolls are centered on the implied bass motion underlying the original rolls. Similarly, an example from the Berlioz *partitions*, the stunning 1–4–1–4 movement that expands half-steps into major sevenths and minor ninths (Example 3.11) reveals his manipulation of the pitches of the strings. Liszt's reworking of the accompaniment into virtuosic figurations is thus deeply rooted in full knowledge of the original content.

Liszt also deploys virtuosic figurations to heighten programmatic ideas inherent in the original. He responds aptly to the contrasting realms of character and mood in Weber's overture to *Der Freischütz* by offering two characteristic basses: the rumbling



chromatic and resonant diatonic arpeggios. He actually played the rumbling bass in a difficult *ossia* instead of his more faithful rendering underneath, immediately capturing the ear of the contemporary audience. In his two-piano arrangements, as illustrated in the brilliant figurations that accompany the extended D-minor *Mazeppa* theme (Example 7.1), the figurations can be virtuosic arpeggios that skip and sweep over a wide range of the keyboard. Yet when we look in detail, the contour of the figurations conveys a sense of the vastness portrayed by the strings of the original. The bravura figurations, which could have been a mere showcase, become distinctive within Liszt's faithful approach to the original and his creative solutions.

One of the important aspects of Liszt's virtuosic techniques in his reworking process is not only what types of techniques he deploys appropriately for the context, but also how he uses them in an effective manner. He neither repeats nor continues virtuosic figurations, but constantly shifts from one to another. His avoidance of continuity serves as one of the significant underlying aesthetics of his reworkings. As one example, in his rendering of the *God Save The King* coda of Weber's *Jubilee* overture (Example 5.1), the consistent thirty-second notes of string writing become more highly virtuosic and varied because of his constant permutations of figuration. He refuses a simple repetition of one type of bravura figuration, which would have been a literal approach to the relentless scales of the original. The result of his reworking is to emulate the intrinsically virtuosic scales and maintain the interest and intensity of the original, while turning it into his own virtuoso spectacle.

In the Rhapsodies, virtuosic flourishes throughout immediately convey the composer's showcase on the surface. Yet, they could be another rendering of cimbalom

playing (Example 9.6, Rhapsodies). Just as the cimbalom player alternates the hammers rapidly, relying on a repeating pattern, Liszt carefully gives a consistent contour to his flourishes and inscribes a meticulous fingering to articulate it. In addition to the bravura filigree, Liszt's virtuosity resides in a different type of technical demand when he creates a rapid hammering on one note (Examples 9.8–9.9). The impulse behind this technical challenge is his reference to the cimbalom player's rhythmic striking of one hammer. Liszt fully comprehends this cimbalom technique, which challenges the player to realize an immediate rebound of the hammer to create a percussive effect.

To sum up, Liszt explores the virtuosic figurations and techniques he deploys throughout by using the full resources of the keyboard and convincingly going beyond the confinements of the keyboard. He acutely selects the virtuosic techniques appropriate to the model, revitalizing conventional idioms for his own purposes, including a significant programmatic role in his two-piano arrangements or a cimbalom flurry in his Rhapsodies. The brilliant virtuosity stems from his deep sense of faithfulness to the original.

### **(3) Visual Effects**

Robert Schumann made the famous claim that Liszt “must be heard—and also seen; for if Liszt played behind the scenes, a great deal of the poetry of his playing would be lost.”<sup>3</sup>

The visual sensation emanating from Liszt's performing style has received significant

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<sup>3</sup> *Robert Schumann on Music and Musicians*, ed. Konrad Wolff, trans. Paul Rosenfeld (New York: W. W. Norton, 1969), 150; quoted in Gooley, *Liszt as Virtuoso*, 47; Williams, *Portrait*, 122–23; Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 71; Leppert, “Cultural Contradiction, Idolatry, and the Piano Virtuoso: Franz Liszt,” in *Piano Roles*, 252–81, at 265, n. 73; Hooker, *Redefining*, 72.

attention from critics of his time as well as modern scholars.<sup>4</sup> Liszt's virtuosic figurations throughout his reworkings immediately dazzle both the eyes and the ears of the audience, highlighting his own spectacle, yet at the same time the impulse behind his virtuosity is his conscientious approach to the essence of the original. Liszt's use of keyboard register often creates a visual effect throughout his reworkings in his orchestral arrangements. As illustrated in his rendering of the characteristic dotted rhythms in a climax of the first movement of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony (Example 2.4), Liszt successfully expanded and contracted the keyboard register, maintaining interest in the constant rhythm, sustaining the massive effect of the *tutti*, and most of all, creating a powerfully visual effect and thus turning the consistent orchestral writing into his own spectacle.

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<sup>4</sup> For the contemporary accounts, see Schumann's remarks of 1840 as cited above; Wagner, *Richard's Wagner's Prose Works*, trans. William Ashton Ellis (New York: Broude Bros, 1966), 53–54; and Boissier in Mach, *Liszt Studies*, Lesson, 15, 16, 21, and 24 on 14 February 1832. For studies of the visual, aural, physical effect of Liszt's virtuosity, see Tomi Mäkelä, *Virtuosität und Werkcharakter: Zur Virtuosität in den Klavierkonzerten der Hochromantik* (Munich: Emil Katsbichler, 1989); Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Leppert, "Cultural Contradiction," 252–81, particularly 255, nn. 51–54; 258, n. 58; Paul Metzner, *Crescendo of the Virtuoso* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998); Kevin Kopelson, *Beethoven's Kiss: Pianism, Perversion, and the Mastery of Desire* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996); Susan Bernstein, *Virtuosity of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), ch. 3 and 4; Mark Mitchell, *Virtuosi: A Defense and a (Sometimes Erotic) Celebration of Great Pianists* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000); Jane O'Dea, *Virtue or Virtuosity? Explorations in the Ethics of Musical Performance* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000); David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770–1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 139–43; Lawrence Kramer, "Franz Liszt and the Virtuoso Public Sphere," in Kramer, *Musical Meaning*, 68–99; Samson, *Virtuosity* (2003); Gooley, *Virtuoso Liszt* (2004), ch. 1, 2, and 5, particularly pp. 18–77, 47, 78, 106–7, 159–60, 203–6; Gooley, "The Battle against Instrumental Virtuosity," 104; Gooley, "Liszt and his Audiences, 1835–48: Virtuosity, Criticism and Society in the Virtuosenzeit" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 1999), 16, 56, 58, 300; James Deaville, "A Star is Born? Czerny, Liszt, and the Pedagogy of Virtuosity" in *Beyond the Art of Finger Dexterity*; Deaville, "Politics of Liszt's Virtuosity: New Light on the Dialectics of a Cultural Phenomenon," in Michael Saffle and Rossana Dalmonte, ed., *Liszt and the Birth of Modern Europe* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2003); Deaville, "Liszt's Virtuosity and his Audience: Gender, Class, and Power in the Concert Hall of the Early 19th Century," in *Das Andere: Eine Spurensuche in der Musikgeschichte des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Annette Kreutziger-Herr (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1998), 281–300; Deaville, "Liszt and the Twentieth Century," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, ed. Kenneth Hamilton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 47; Deaville, "The Making of a Myth," 188–89.

In the different realm of his renderings of cimbalom playing, Liszt's assiduous reworkings often turn the pianist into a cimbalom player in a visual dimension. He deliberately divides the tremolos between the hands in alternation (in the case of No. 10, Example 9.1), as if portraying the movement of the two mallet-wielding hands over the cimbalom through the movement of the hands on the keyboard. He is also aware of the unique pitch layout on the cimbalom and its impact on a peculiar physical movement involved in performance. Through this lens, his use of the extensive range of the keyboard, whether a series of widely-spaced tremolos (No. 11, Example 9.2) or rapid skips in trills (No. 2, Example 9.5b), suggests his focus on the distinctive physical movement of the cimbalom player and its visual effect. In addition, his deep understanding of the cimbalom reorients our conventional focus on bravura flourishes toward a particular type of cimbalom playing reliant on the contour of repeating patterns. Throughout his renderings of cimbalom playing, one of the motivations for his notational and compositional peculiarities is therefore his attempt to emulate the distinctive choreography of cimbalom playing and its visual effect as a corollary.

The visual effects that emanate from his renderings represent how Liszt often regarded the tactile quality of the hands, fingers, and arms as integral to conveying the idioms of the model instruments. The visual effect is also the result of his project of transferring the model onto the sound and sight of his performance, making his role as a creative composer–arranger–performer visible. Thus, the “creative” changes he makes are ultimately more faithful to the original than a note-for-note rendering would be.

#### (4) Contrast and Juxtaposition

During his virtuoso years, Liszt's exploitation of contrast served as one of his essential performance strategies, capturing the eyes and ears of his contemporary audiences. For instance, *The Musical Journal* reported on 12 May 1840 about his concert at the Queen's Concert Room in London:

His [Liszt's] performance was perfectly astounding, incomprehensible! At one moment in arpeggio, in octave, or in full chords, a hurricane of rich and varied harmonies fell upon the ear with all the effect of a full orchestra, while at the next the most delicious flow of pure, beautiful, and expressive melody stole upon the senses, leaving the soul in a delirium of wonder and delight.<sup>5</sup>

Liszt's exploitation of contrast serves as one of his significant reworking methods. In his orchestral arrangements, he often pits the straightforward theme against a more virtuosic transition or accompaniment. It is an effective means of maintaining the original composer's thematic ideas, while simultaneously demonstrating Liszt's own enhancement of pianistic sonority and effects around the theme. This compositional method also fulfills the dual demands of Liszt as virtuoso pianist and as virtuoso arranger and composer.

Contrast as an essential compositional feature, however, goes beyond the relationship between theme and accompaniment or transition. Liszt's exploitation of contrast never dwells on the one-dimensional duality between tutti and solo(s), between thick and light texture, between low and high register, and between bravura and sparse writing. In his contrast, he exploits various musical parameters, including dynamics, texture, figuration, and register, and more importantly he often juxtaposes different types of contrast. For one example, in the rendering of the slow movement of Beethoven's

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<sup>5</sup> Williams, *Portrait*, 130. For other anecdotes that record the contrasting sides of Liszt's performance, see Boissier, *Liszt pédagogue*, 86; Williams, *Portrait*, 133.

Symphony No. 9 (Example 2.5), Liszt heightens different types of contrast intrinsic to the original orchestral score. For the *cantabile* passage for strings marked *piano* and *dolce*, Liszt further lightens the texture as rendered in three staves only for strings, drastically eliminating the other instrumental parts. The piano *cantabile* in a light texture is immediately juxtaposed with a *tutti* passage in stark *fortissimo* chords and thick texture. As in this contrast, Liszt frequently combines various musical parameters intricately and juxtaposes them both vertically and horizontally. Moreover, the multi-dimensional contrast becomes more startlingly visual when combined with Liszt's manipulation of keyboard register as a further layer of contrast.

Liszt's exploitation of register serves as one of the effective contrasts in his reworkings. As most evident in his arrangements of Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique* and overtures, his registral contrasts help heighten the timbral contrast between the strings and woodwinds in alternation, or between *tutti* or solo (Example 3.2); maintain the interest in the constant rhythm of the original (Example 3.2; also, Beethoven *partitions*, Example 2.4); or reinforce the contrasting dynamics that portray sudden change of moods in the original (Example 3.13). Through registral changes and contrasts, Liszt convincingly compensates for the confines of the piano, such as the restricted tone color and sustaining power. Moreover, the registral exploitation provides him an effective means of offering a different approach to the performing style of the original material, turning it into his own spectacle.

In his two-piano arrangements, Liszt's distribution of material helps heighten the contrasts of the model by using the resources available on the two pianos. This is shown in his rendering of the *Mazeppa* theme (Examples 7.1 and 7.2), making his judicious

division between theme and accompaniment, *forte* and *piano*, straightforward simplicity and high virtuosity in figuration, and two groups of instruments such as strings and woodwinds. Yet in these same examples, his distribution extends beyond simple dichotomies. By alternating the pianos and switching their roles, his distribution responds effectively to the changes in key, texture, and orchestration of the original.

In the Rhapsodies, contrast is inherent in a structure typical of Hungarian Gypsy-band music: the slow–fast (*lassú–friss*) scheme. In his renderings of cimbalom playing, Liszt also responds to this structural contrast through the contrasting techniques, effects, and characters of the instrument’s playing. He imbues the Introduction that often precedes a slow section with the prominent shimmering sound of cimbalom tremolos or the distinctive *rubato*-style of cimbalom improvisation. In between slow and fast sections, he carefully incorporates an extensive passage of cimbalom tremolos, deliberately suspending the tempo in the moment and thus making the following fast section more effective. In contrast, in a fast section, a rhythmic and percussive aspect of cimbalom playing comes to the fore: the imaginary cimbalom player hammers relentlessly on a single note, building up excitement, virtuosity, and spectacle.

##### **(5) Avoidance of Rigid Patterns**

Piano arrangers must carefully select notes, adjust register, and delineate the texture to make them fit into keyboard texture. Throughout his transferral and reworking process, Liszt’s adherence to typical keyboard texture becomes less significant for him than the attempt to render the original texture conscientiously. In other words, whereas customary keyboard texture requires a skeleton of the melody in alignment with the harmonic

accompaniment, Liszt's layout often violates this expectation. As illustrated in his rendering of a new theme in the oboe in combination with the main theme in cello and violin II from the first movement of Beethoven's Third Symphony (Example 2.2), he never hesitates to deploy a layered-hand position, cross-hands technique, and a difficult and cumbersome movement of the hands. Behind this technical challenge lies his effort to capture the details of the intricate original texture. Similarly, in one of his renderings of the Berlioz *partitions* (Example 3.6), he poses the technical challenge of coordinating the syncopated rhythm and leaping basses simultaneously, yet this difficulty is necessary for him to preserve the polyrhythmic textures characteristic of Berlioz's orchestral compositions.

Liszt's two-piano arrangements have even richer examples of his non-repetition of any formulaic pattern in the distribution of material. On several occasions his distinctive types of distribution and layout provide a new way of thinking in the transferral to two pianos. To take but one example, in his rendering of the opening phrase of *Les Préludes* (Example 7.4), his cutting across the phrase is unique. The motivation for this peculiar action is his focus on a subtle difference of timbre in the orchestral version caused by a change from cellos and basses to violas. Moreover, through his cutting-across, the originally unsettling phrase becomes more fragmented, showing his scrupulous approach to the original behind his unique layout. His distribution also helps reinvigorate the original uniform writing by creating a novel effect in both visual and aural dimensions over the course of the movement from one piano to the other.



The diverse and distinctive types of Liszt's distributions reveal his deep understanding of a change in instrumental timbres of the original and his shrewd sense of how to exploit the interactions between the pianos. Diverging from any predetermined scheme of layout, his own distributions offer his convincing solutions to the frequent lack of color in piano arrangements by others. These distributions also help the audience and performer to experience a wider spectrum of sound and dynamics than that available on a single keyboard.

In the Rhapsodies, Liszt's adherence to typical keyboard texture becomes less significant for him than the effort to capture the model instrument more effectively. In his rendering of cimbalom tremolos, he does not repeat what he did in the pianistic adaptation of orchestral tremolos, but displays his unique approach to figuration, layout, and texture in an attempt to capture the distinctive techniques and sounds of cimbalom playing convincingly. He also transforms the standard playing of pianistic trills into a distinctive type that evokes the way a cimbalom player would render his trills. Liszt's unique layout stems from his conscientious efforts to capture the essential and distinctive characteristics of cimbalom performance.

Aside from avoiding rigid repeating schemes, Liszt confounds any expectation of conventional keyboard idioms by deliberately using non-pianistic figurations. In his *partitions*, on several occasions he deliberately introduces a simple hammering unidiomatic of the piano. As illustrated in several instances of the Beethoven *partitions*, his use of octave hammering corresponds to his focus on rhythmic conformity with the surrounding passages (Example 2.7); the simple octaves with chords help capture the salient shape of the string tremolos more faithfully, highlighting its visual effect and

making his own visual impact on the listener (Example 2.9); and the chordal hammering helps maintain the static character of the original (Example 2.10). By using this non-pianistic hammering, he aimed not just for diversity and virtuosity in pianistic terms but to capture the essence of the original

In his Rhapsodies, on special occasions Liszt also completely refuses to make the model material idiomatic to the piano. One representative example is his use of single-pitch hammering (Example 9.7). This is strikingly non-pianistic, yet through the lens of Hungarian Gypsy-style music, it refers to one of the significant styles of cimbalom playing: reiteration of a single note. Although it appears only briefly, its visual and aural impact on the audience is powerful: first, because it is distinctively non-pianistic; and second, because Liszt contrasts it with the preceding virtuosic flourishes and uses it effectively to conclude the passage. The single-note hammering also appears in a completely different character when Liszt emulates the percussive effect of cimbalom playing in a fast section (Examples 9.8–9.9). In short, he carefully uses non-pianistic hammering for two different aspects of cimbalom playing, in both cases making the idiom of the cimbalom noticeable in the midst of keyboard idioms, thus highlighting the unfamiliar over the familiar when it is necessary and effective.

By avoiding repeating what had been done in existing piano arrangements and adaptations, Liszt's renderings elevate the prevailing practice into a professional, artistic pursuit. His notion of *partition* already distinguished his solo-piano arrangements from the copious superficial ones of the time, advocating scrupulousness and artistic interpretations from an arranger. Fink's assessment of Liszt's *partitions* of Beethoven's symphonies underscored the *partitions* as meticulous, difficult, exclusive, and

inaccessible for the general public, aligning them with the realm of a select few pianists and audiences. His two-piano arrangements are also situated in a distinctive position in the development of the medium, because they were faithful, virtuosic, and received well by professional pianists, elevating the status of the oeuvre to an independent concert piece.

The same divergence from convention for artistic pursuit applies to Liszt's Rhapsodies. The Rhapsodies departed from the prevailing tendency of the contemporary compositions influenced by Hungarian Gypsy music that were mostly entertaining and less artistic pieces.<sup>6</sup> As illustrated earlier in his 1859 *Des Bohémiens*, Liszt's Rhapsodies also emerged in part from his attempts to "correct" his predecessors' approaches to Viennese adaptations of Hungarian-Gypsy music, criticizing their "fleeting attention" to the source material and misunderstandings of it and establishing himself as the authority on Hungarian music. Nevertheless, the way Liszt appropriates the "sacred text" aspect of the Beethoven *partitions* is completely different from the way he elevates the popular and "low" aspect of Hungarian Gypsy-style music, peripheral to the mainstream of the European musical tradition, to his Romantic keyboard idioms.

Just as one of the motivations for his project of Beethoven *partitions* was to "correct" the superficial versions of the time, the same line of reasoning can be extended to the Rhapsodies, relating the two different groups of repertoire. As for the renderings of cimbalom playing, whereas the previous practice was generally confined to color or a subsidiary role in minor sections, his borrowing of cimbalom playing is extensive, assiduous, and novel. His deep approach to the cimbalom and Gypsy-band idioms

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<sup>6</sup> Loya, *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 65.

ultimately helped reconceive the idioms as being worthy of the pursuit of artistic composition.

The discussions of (1)–(5) above offer understanding of Liszt's reworkings across his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies. By jumping back and forth among different groups of repertoire, we have discovered that several of Liszt's reworking techniques and aesthetics provide an effective comparison and contrast among the groups. In each realm of his renderings, whether solo-piano arrangements, two-piano ones, and imitations of cimbalom playing, the borrowed material is different; the medium to which the existing material is adapted is also different; and the resultant sound and effect of his rendering are completely different. Yet, such differences are precisely why the shared techniques and aesthetics across the repertoire become more significant for shedding light on the correspondence and distinction in his reworkings between his orchestral arrangements and Rhapsodies.

Moreover, the recurring techniques and aesthetics reinforce the recurring theme that Liszt's fidelity and creativity are interdependent. His sensitive attention to the distinctive sounds and effects of individual instruments motivates him to search for appropriate solutions in his own pianistic terms. When we take a detailed look, we discover that the seemingly pianistic writing is indebted to a particular articulation, harmonic content, and performance gesture of the model instrument(s). His meticulous approach to the intricate layers of timbres of the original lead him to explore a unique hand-position, finger technique, or layout. The virtuosic keyboard figurations are quintessential of Liszt's creative prowess as a virtuoso pianist-composer, but on a deeper level they are used to emulate the texture, effect, or performance technique of the model.

The visual effect that his renderings often create provides his own spectacle, challenging the authorial presence of the original, as if convincing us that his version surpasses the original. Yet at the same time the effect demonstrates his solutions to the confinement of the keyboard, and, more importantly, his faithful attention to the visual effect inherent in the idioms of the model instrument. Liszt's creativity also resides in his unique layouts, figurations, and textures. The creativity in turn reflects his search for better solutions to emulating the model faithfully.

The major impetus of this study is Liszt's uses of existing music. Kenneth Hamilton claims that "Liszt's imagination often seemed to need a specific pre-existing musical stimulus (however trivial) to work from, and this could be his own early pieces as well as the works of others."<sup>7</sup> Liszt's compositional process was often inextricably bound to his borrowing of the music of other composers. His use of existing music is truly staggering in amount—roughly half of his enormous output is based on the music of others—comprehensive in scope, and varied in technique. Amidst his substantial borrowing throughout his oeuvre, Liszt's considerable arranging of orchestral music was a life-long dedication.<sup>8</sup> His use of Hungarian Gypsy-band music style also occupied him throughout his life; his arranging of specific Hungarian tunes in Gypsy-band style, in keeping with his close study of Gypsy performance practice, testifies to his significant

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<sup>7</sup> Hamilton, "Liszt's Early and Weimar Piano Work," in *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, 57–85, at 60.

<sup>8</sup> Besides Liszt's activities in the realm of arranging orchestral music during his virtuoso years and Weimar years, the majority of which are considered in this study, in his later period from 1856 to 1881 Liszt explored orchestral music by diverse composers, including the German Wagner, the Italian Verdi, the Russians César Cui and Tchaikovsky, and the French Saint-Saëns, yet reorienting his earlier reworking methods in the field of orchestral arrangements to underscore his late compositional styles in a simplified, concentrated, yet still innovative manner. For the discussion of late arrangements, see Kregor, "Stylistic Reconstructions" in *Liszt as Transcriber*, 186–219. The arrangement of Cui's *Tarantella*, op. 12 for a solo piano was, in fact, one of the last compositions Liszt was tackling before his death in late July 1885 at Bayreuth; Kregor, *Liszt as Transcriber*, 1.

project from 1840 to 1853, as represented in the first fifteen Hungarian Rhapsodies.<sup>9</sup>

Against the backdrop of these types of borrowing, this study has contributed to one dimension of them, inviting further inquiries into his reworking methods.

As the field of musical borrowing has motivated us to deepen our knowledge of the extent and manner in which Liszt used borrowed material, methods employed in the field have helped us to discover both the interrelationships and the uniqueness of types of borrowing, understand the nature and depth of the relationship between the new piece and the original, and strengthen our insight into the underlying aesthetics of those borrowings without hasty conclusions or speculation. Although this study has contributed to our understanding of only one facet of Liszt's borrowing, it has provided one significant constituent of his grand project of arranging orchestral music, simultaneously juxtaposing it with his reworkings of Hungarian Gypsy-ensemble music by focusing on cimbalom playing. The closer inspection of musical analyses throughout has helped to deepen the understanding of the relationships between Liszt's models and his renderings, comprehend his reworking methods thoroughly, and permit comparison between disparate realms of borrowing. This comparison, in particular, has helped us to discover each realm as unique and at the same time interrelated with each other through recurring

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<sup>9</sup> Loya, *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 101. Liszt's arranging of Hungarian Gypsy-band style pieces began at his age 17 in Paris when he wrote *Zwei ungarische Werbungstänze von László Fáy und János Bihari* (1828), considered his first piece of Hungarian Gypsy-band music, as Loya claims in *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 81–82; for the first two parts of *Zwei ungarische*, Liszt arranged the two popular pieces of Hungarian Gypsy-band style music by Fáy and Bihari, respectively, in a literal manner; for the final part, he provided his own free, virtuosic variations on the Bihari piece. The development of his arrangements, however, truly began with the 1840 tour of Hungary and his deep study of Gypsy-band performance practice. He published several series of *Magyar Dallok* (Hungarian Melodies, 1840, 1843–44), which are almost literal transcriptions, and then he began transcribing and publishing a new series of *Magyar Rhapsodiák* (1846–47). Then he substantially revised and rewrote the 22 *Magyar Dallok* and *Rhapsodiák*, and together with two newly-composed rhapsodies, published a new cycle of 15 *Rhapsodies hongroises* in 1851. See Loya, *Liszt's Transcultural Modernism*, 97–105, particularly at 101–2.

techniques, aesthetics, and themes, ultimately enlivening the dynamic of Liszt's reworkings.

Appendix I. Liszt's Preface to his Piano Arrangements of Beethoven's Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in the Breitkopf & Härtel's edition, 1840.

Preface

The name of Beethoven is sacred in the Arts. Today his symphonies are universally recognized as masterpieces; whoever appreciates an earnest desire to expand his knowledge or even to create something new, can never analyze and study these symphonies enough. Therefore, every mode of disseminating and making them more commonly accessible has a certain merit, and one cannot denounce a relative use of any of the previous and very abundant arrangements, although they [the arrangements] most often appear of little value upon further investigation. The worst lithograph, the most erroneous translation, yet provides an image, albeit a vague image, of the genius of a Michelangelo, of a Shakespeare; despite this, one recognizes now and again the traces, albeit half-smudged, of the enthusiasm of the master in the most incomplete piano reduction. Meanwhile, through the expansion, which the piano had won in the most recent times, as consequence of the advances in technical completion and mechanical improvements, it is now possible to accomplish more and better things, as had been accomplished thus far. By means of the immeasurable development of its harmonic intensity, the pianoforte attempts to gradually take possession of all orchestral compositions. In the scope of its seven octaves, [the pianoforte] is able, with few exceptions, to reproduce all movements, all combinations, all figures of the most thorough and most profound composition, and leaves to the orchestra no other advantages than the differences of timbres and the plentiful effects—certainly advantages that are enormous. With this intention I undertook the work, which I now surrender to the world. I must admit, that I would see it as an absolute waste of my time, if I had not done nothing more than add to the many previous published arrangements of the symphonies a new one done in the usual manner. Yet I hold my time well spent, if I have succeeded in transferring to the piano, not only the large outlines of Beethoven's composition, but also all of its subtleties and smaller movements, which so meaningfully contribute to the perfection of the whole. My goal has been achieved when I have done the same as the knowledgeable engraver and the conscientious translator, who can encompass the spirit of a work and thus contribute to the recognition of the great masters and to the education of the senses for the beautiful.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The preface was first printed in French and German with the date "Rome 1839" in Breitkopf & Härtel's edition of the piano arrangement of the Fifth and Sixth Symphonies in 1840. See *NLA*, vol. 18, xviii. My translation is based on the German version.



## VORWORT

Der Name *Beethoven* ist heilig in der Kunst. Seine Symphonien werden heutzutage allgemein als Meisterwerke anerkannt; wer irgend den ernstesten Wunsch hegt, sein Wissen zu erweitern oder selbst Neues zu schaffen, der kann diese Symphonien nie genug durchdenken und studieren. Deshalb hat jede Art und Weise, sie zu verbreiten und allgemeiner zugänglich zu machen, ein gewisses Verdienst, und den bisherigen, ziemlich zahlreichen Bearbeitungen ist ein verhältnismässiger Nutzen durchaus nicht abzusprechen, obwohl sie bei tieferem Eindringen meistens nur von geringem Wert erscheinen. Der schlechteste Steindruck, die fehlerhafteste Übersetzung gibt doch immer noch ein, wenn auch unbestimmtes Bild von dem Genie eines Michelangelo, eines Shakespeare; in dem unvollständigsten Klavierauszuge erkennt man dennoch hin und wieder die, wenn auch halb verwischten Spuren von der Begeisterung des Meisters. Indessen, durch die Ausdehnung, welche das Pianoforte in der neuesten Zeit zufolge der Fortschritte in der technischen Fertigkeit und in der mechanischen Verbesserung gewonnen hat, wird es jetzt möglich, mehr und Besseres zu leisten, als bisher geleistet worden ist. Durch die unermessliche Entwicklung seiner harmonischen Gewalt sucht das Pianoforte sich immer mehr alle Orchesterkompositionen anzueignen. In dem Umfange seiner sieben Oktaven vermag es, mit wenigen Ausnahmen, alle Züge, alle Kombinationen, alle Gestaltungen der gründlichsten und tiefsten Tonschöpfung wiederzugeben, und läßt dem Orchester keine anderen Vorzüge, als die Verschiedenheit der Klangfarben und die massenhaften Effekte—Vorzüge freilich, die ungeheuer sind. In solcher Absicht habe ich die Arbeit, die ich der Welt jetzt übergebe, unternommen. Ich gestehe, daß ich es für eine ziemlich unnütze Verwendung meiner Zeit ansehen müßte, wenn ich weiter nichts getan hätte, als die vielen bisherigen Ausgaben der Symphonien mit einer neuen, in gewohnter Weise bearbeiteten vermehren; aber ich halte meine Zeit für gut angewendet, wenn es mir gelungen ist, nicht bloß die großen Umrisse der Beethovenschen Komposition, sondern auch alle jenen Feinheiten und kleineren Züge auf das Pianoforte zu übertragen, welche so bedeutend zur Vollendung des Ganzen mitwirken. Mein Ziel ist erreicht, wenn ich es dem verständigen Kupferstecher, dem gewissenhaften Übersetzer gleichgetan habe, welche den Geist eines Werkes auffassen und so zur Erkenntnis der großen Meister und zur Bildung des Sinnes für das Schöne beitragen.

Rom, 1865 F. Liszt

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# CURRICULUM VITAE

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## Education

Indiana University, Bloomington, Ph.D., Musicology, 2015  
Indiana University, Bloomington, M.A., Musicology, 2008  
Indiana University, Bloomington, master's program, Piano Performance, 2003–04  
Ewha Womens University, Seoul, South Korea, master's program, Piano Performance, 2002  
Ewha Womens University, Seoul, South Korea, B.M., Piano Performance, 2002

## Fellowships and Scholarships

Indiana University Jacobs School of Music Fellowship, 2008–10

Ewha Womens University, Full Scholarships, 2000–02

## Awards

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American Musicological Society, Annual Meeting, Travel Funding, 2015

## Publications

“Between Fidelity and Creativity: Liszt’s Renderings of Cimbalom Playing in his Hungarian Rhapsodies.” Article under revision for *Journal of The American Liszt Society*.

“Fanny Hensel’s *Sonntagsmusiken*: Her Uses of Different Musical Spaces at Leipziger Strasse 3, Berlin” (in English). *Musical Discourse* (음악논단 in Korean) 34 (October 2015): 185–232. Available from <http://www.dbpia.co.kr/Publication/PLCT00002102>.

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## Academic Presentations

American Musicological Society, Allegheny Chapter, Fall Meeting (Morgantown, WV), October 2015  
“Liszt’s Conscientious and Creative Renderings of Cimbalom Playing in his Hungarian Rhapsodies”

The Musicological Society of Korea, Fall Meeting (Seoul, South Korea),  
November 2015  
“Dynamics of Fidelity and Creativity: Liszt’s Reworkings of Orchestral and  
Gypsy-Band Music”

**Teaching Experience**

Indiana University Jacobs School of Music, Bloomington, Indiana, 2010–12, 2014

Visiting Lecturer, Musicology

M542: Music History Review for Graduate Students II, Spring 2014

Associate Instructor, Musicology

M401: History and Literature of Music I: Antiquity to 1750, Fall 2010 and 2011

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